

Clifford (R.)

T H B

HISTORY

O F

FAIR ROSAMOND,

Mistress to HENRY II.

A N D

JANE SHORE,

Concubine to EDWARD IV.

KINGS of ENGLAND.

Shewing how they came to be so.

W I T H

Their LIVES, remarkable ACTIONS,
and unhappy ENDS.

*Extracted from eminent Records, and the whole
illustrated with Cuts suitable to each Subject.*

L O N D O N :

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Shewing how they came to the Throne

with

Their Lives and Deaths



Printed by J. Sturges, at the Press of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

LONDON

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

WE have a proverb in England,

“That many speak of Robin-
“Hood, that never shot his Bow.”

The meaning whereof is, That it is common for persons to have those men and women often in their mouths of whom they know but very little: and this I doubt not is as true of those two unfortunate persons, who are the subject of the ensuing history, as of any other whomsoever. They have in general a notion of them, that they were the Concubines of two famous kings of England; but what was their original, and by what artifices they came to be brought into the royal

arms of their respective Sovereigns, are altogether strangers to the history of. And therefore a full account thereof cannot but be the more acceptable.

But there is another reason that makes this history more necessary; which is, that it is yet recent in the memories of most, that we have had Royal misses that have lived in that pomp and splendor, being made Peereesses of the realm, and holding the first rank among the nobility, as if their honours had legitimated their crimes, and that adultery and whoredom were no sins, because it was with their Prince that they committed it: It is true indeed, that the illustrious and virtuous Queen Catharine was of a milder temper than Queen Eleanor, and was not so much disturbed at the variety of misses that were kept under the nose by King Charles,

as

as the furious Queen Eleanor was with the fair, but unfortunate Rosamond, tho' her extraction was more noble, and her beauty far transcending that of other misses; and tho' the royal misses were a vast expence in an after reign yet there was none that fell foul upon them, after the death of those Princes; though I have not heard that any of them did so much good, in the time of their favour with those Princes, as Jane Shore did in that of hers with King Edward the fourth, unless it was Madam Gwin; who (how mean soever her extraction was) bore her exaltation with less pride, and did more good in her station, than any of the rest being charitable to them that were in want, and often refreshing the prisoners with her bounty, and for that reason was more acceptable to the people, than all the other court-mistresses,

mistresses, however dignify'd and distinguished with their high-flown titles.

Perhaps the splendor of their living, and the port they bore in the world, may make others, as well as themselves, think they were guilty of no crime; but them that shall read the following history, will find that every miss, how rich or poor soever they be, yet if she lives in adultery and whoredom, is as much, if not more guilty, than Rosamond and Jane Shore: for of either of these it may be said; they sought not the royal favour; but endeavour'd to avoid it as much as possible; and were both of them betrayed by those whom they trusted: King Henry being brought into Rosamond's Bed, by her Governess Alethea, both without her knowledge, and even while she was asleep: and as for Jane Shore, none could

could be more cautious and reserved than she; blaming her husband's soft and easy temper, in boasting of her beauty, and exposing her to the view of strangers, and by that means bringing her first into the presence of the King; altho' it must be owned he did not know him to be so. And after in the whole transaction, the false and treacherous Mrs. Blague was more to blame than she.

Not that I hereby go about to excuse either of them as free from blame: for Rosamon^d was willing to taste the pleasures of the court, and yet perhaps believed she could have kept herself from the pollutions of it. But she before hand knew the King had a great kindness for her; and had the fatal consequence of it too plainly laid before her by her parents, to make the least defence for what she did by pleading ignorance. And as to Mrs. Shore tho' I believe

believe she never did at first design to go so far as she did afterwards, yet when the King in disguise met her at Mrs. Blague's, and there proposed to her unlawful love, 'twas a fair item to her to go there no more: she indeed blamed him for proposing it; but that was not enough, she should have forborn going there again, and staid with her own husband, and then she had done well. If we would be innocent, we must not only avoid doing evil, but all the ways that lead to it.

Let me therefore commend this history to the serious perusal of all that would avoid the occasion of sin; for here, they shall see, lust is a pleasure bought with pain, a delight hatch'd with disquiet, a content pass'd with fear, and a sin finished with sorrow.

And if any are so weak as to be taken with the gaudy trappings of
Royalty,

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Royalty, and glittering pomps of the court, let 'em read on, and see the dreadful catastrophe of this imaginary greatness, and then let 'em make a judgement thereof. They that imagine Rosamond happy in her bower, let them behold her trembling with a cup of poison in her hand, and in vain begging to be deliver'd from that dreadful draught: and when she had drank it, let them behold the triumphs of death over beauty; and see what disorders it makes in nature, how her late beautiful face is disfigur'd, and the roses on her cheeks all dead and withering, her eyes distorted, and her whole body swall'd up, and labouring under horrid convulsions; and who would change conditions with her now? and yet all this is but the wall and out-side, the least part of the ravages of sin.

So whilst some think Jane Shore was happy in being belov'd of King Edward and having such crowds of petitioners attending her; yet such will soon change their minds, when they come to find her doing penance through Cheapside, bare foot and bare legg'd, and afterwards gladly picking up the refuse of the dogs upon the dunghill, and at last dying in a ditch.





THE
HISTORY
OF

FAIR ROSAMOND.

CHAP. I.

*Of the Parentage and Birth of King
Henry the Second, and by what Means
he came to the Crown, &c.*

KING Henry the First of England, and
youngest son of William the Con-
queror, had several children, to wit, Prince
William his eldest son, and Richard, his
B youngest

youngest son, and Maud, or matilda, and Mary Countess of Perch; but by an unhappy accident lost them all but Maud, who being married to the Emperor Henry the Fifth of Germany, was very happily absent: The matter was thus, The King having had wars with the French King, and Baldwin Earl of Flanders, whom the French King had set on, for they were always a back friend to England, there was near the town of Nice a great battle fought between them, which continued for nine hours, in which, although King Henry got the Victory, yet was he so hard put to it, that he professed he fought not then for victory, so much as for life. To prevent therefore any more such bloody battles, whilst he was victorious, there were overtures of peace made him, which he hearkened to, and so it was concluded; to strengthen which, there was a marriage made between William the King's eldest son, and the daughter of the Duke of Anjou, at the solemnization whereof, there was very great and royal feasting; but in their return for England, the King went first, and his children in another ship after him: but some of the nobles that attended the Princes, staying

a little behind the King, to take their leaves, were very merry with their friends, and by that means the mariners got such plenty of wine that they were for the most part made very drunk; and coming away with full sail,



in hopes to have overtaken the King, they run upon the shallows, where the ship beating along by the violence of the wind and waves, foundered; yet the Prince with his
fair

fair bride, and many others, got into the long-boat and put off. But to hear the dreadful cries of those that were left in the ship, and were just sinking, would have almost pierced a heart of stone, especially to consider how soon their mirth was turned into the most lamentable mourning: but amongst all their cries there was none made so deep an impression upon the Prince, as those of Mary the Countess of Perch, his sister, whom he dearly loved, who crying out most piteously to him, to take her in his boat, and not suffer her to perish in the waters, he commanded the seamen to row back and take her in; which they attempting to do, as soon as they came near, many others who were as willing to save their lives as the Prince was his sister's, laying hold of the boat, and neither words nor swords being able to make them let go, sunk the boat, and so they all perished together, the Prince and his fair bride making their bride bed in a watry grave; with him perished also Richard his younger brother, Mary the Countess of Perch, his sister Lucia, his niece, and her husband, the Earl of Chester, with many other persons of quality; leaving behind them a sad instance

of

of the mutability of fortune, and the uncertainty of human life. There were only three or four of the seamen that swam to the shore upon planks, who were the sad relaters of this tragical shipwreck, which filled the court with the deepest mourning, and the whole nation with an universal heaviness.

The King's children, all but Matilda, before named, being thus unhappily lost, and the Emperor her husband dying without children, she was again married to Jeffery Plantagenet, Earl of Anjou, and heir to Fulk Earl of Anjou in France, by whom she had issue, three sons, viz. Henry, Jeffery, and William. And now King Henry, to make the crown sure to his daughter and her children, swore the people of England three times to be true and faithful to his daughter Maud and her heirs, and with their lives and estates to oppose their enemies, and settle the crown in his line after his decease: but he dying, and being buried in the Abby of Reading, which he had founded, Stephen Earl of Boys, son to Adele, daughter to William the Conqueror, ingratiating himself with the nobles, and giving large gifts and immunities to those of the lower rank, got himself crowned King; upon which

bloody wars ensued, 'till at last it was agreed That King Stephen should have the crown during his life, and then Henry should succeed; and Stephen soon after dying of grief for the untimely death of his own son; Henry, who was then victoriously warring in France, came over, and was attended by a great number of the nobility, and was three times crowned, viz. by Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, at Westminster, at Lincoln, and lastly at Worcester; and soon after he married the Princess Eleanor, daughter to the King of Castile and Aragon, by whom he had four sons, viz. Henry, Richard, Jeffery, and John. And in the beginning of his reign, he made many good laws, conquer'd Ireland, and instituted an assembly of his Peers, and other chief men, in the nature of a Parliament, to settle and manage the affairs of the Kingdom: warring often with the French, Scotch, and Welch, as also with his sons, whom the French King stirred up to rebel against him in Normandy, and other his territories beyond the seas. But to pass over further matters of state, I now come to speak of his love to fair Rosamond, which is to be the chief subject matter of this book.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

How King Henry, though married to Queen Eleanor, bearing of the Beauty of Fair Rosamond, became enamoured of her: How he took a Progress to her Father's House, where he was highly entertained; and of his first Courtship to the charming Lady, &c.



KING Henry the Second was a very amorous man though a great warrior, and much given to take delight in the conversation

tion of fair ladies, with which his Court abounded, every one being willing to humour the inclination of their Prince: and he once taking occasion to commend with a more than ordinary passion, the excellent feature of a lady to one of his courtiers, whom he highly esteemed for his valour, he very freely gave him his opinion of the lady in this manner: Your Majesty has indeed judgment in beauty, the lady you mention is fair and charming, I must confess, but for a King so highly to extol her, I see no such perfections in her that deserves such praise from so noble a King: but if with humble submission I may speak, I could tell your Majesty, I have a niece, tho' but young, who in my small judgment of beauty, as far surpasses this lady, as she excels the meanest beauty of your Court; her eyes sparkle like two twin stars, with such piercing rays that dazel those that venture to gaze on them; her forehead is like a heaven of chrystal above them; and her eyebrows shine like jet, and are arched like the rainbow; a spring of roses and lilies are in her cheeks so mixed, that kind nature never before made so fair a mixture of the purest white and red; her nose a little rising,
exceeds

Fair ROSAMOND. 9

exceeds that which Apelles painted Venus with, as the chiefest ornament of her beauty; her lips exceed the coral whenever so finely polished, soft as the crimson velvet, hiding two rows of orient pearl; her chin, which with a little dimple adds beauty to the rest, and makes her face a perfect oval; her rising breasts are like two hills of snow, and her pretty hands excel in whiteness the alabaster, and so spread and branched with various veins of azure. that the motion of the blood in them may be seen thro' the soft transparent skin. To be brief, she is the master piece of nature, who when she had made her, cry'd, alucky hit, and threw away the mould, that none so lovely, fair and charming might come after, to dazel the eyes of men, and wound their hearts. The King hearing this relation, could not but smile with joy, and demanded of him in what corner of the kingdom so great a beauty could be hid, and if he might not see her, to be satisfied whether the description he had given, would agree to the person; or whether his affection did not wrong his judgment? To this the courtier who perceived he had gone too far, and that

the

the King began to be enamoured on the bare report, would fain have drawn in his words again; but it was now too late, nor did he know how to excuse what he had said; However he reply'd, he indeed had made this relation only to set out a perfect beauty to the life; begging his pardon and excuse: But the King perceiving by the coldness of his reply, there was more than ordinary in it, grew angry, and told him he trifled with him, and charged him on his allegiance to tell him the truth: When, fearing the King's displeasure, the courtier plainly said, there is such a Lady, daughter to Walter Lord Clifford, and of my sister, his Lady, living at Godstow in Oxfordshire, of whom many worthy persons have been enamour'd, and sought her in marriage; but have been refused, because her tender heart is yet incapable of love, and this I affirm is the truth, on the forfeiture of my head: as for the name of this fair creature, it is Rosamond; and indeed she is rightly nam'd; for she is, if I have skill in beauty, the peerless rose of the world. while they were thus discoursing, Queen Eleanor came to visit the King, which broke off any further talk about her; nor needed the King
any

Fair ROSAMOND. 11

any more, for his heart was possess'd with a desire to see her, that he could hardly sleep for thinking of her.

It was not long e're the King resolv'd to invite himself to her Father's Houle; and to that end took a progress into Oxfordshire, attended only with some trusty Courtiers, and was highly welcom'd by the Lord Clifford and his Lady, who fearing what his design was, ordered their daughter not to appear in his preience: But the King ordered one of his attendants to enquire of the servants to know if she was at home; and finding she was, demanded to see her, vowing he would not dine till he had. So that all their excuses of illness, and the like, availed nothing; then she was ordered to put on her best apparel, and come down, that she might pay her duty to the King: which she did in the most comely Manner, her blushes, if possible, adding to her beauty: So that at the first sight she appear'd in his eyes like an angel; whereupon he eagerly saluted her; and dinner being placed on the Table, he commanded she should sit down, causing her to be placed directly over against him, on
whose

whose pretty Eyes he so long gazed, that he forgot often times to eat, taking on a long draught the ruin of Fair Rosamond, by the Jealousy of his furious Queen, as in the sequel of this history will appear.



CHAP.

C H A P. III.

How King Henry won the Love of Fair Rosamond by rich Presents, and bribed her Governesse to favour his designs: How he went to France to subdue his Foes, the Letters that passed between him and his Mistress, with other Matters.



THE King having been highly entertain-
ed by the Lord Clifford, father to Fair
Rosamond for three days together, he had se-
veral opportunities to discourse with the
charming

charming virgin whom he so much won upon with presents of rich jewels, and other costly things, that he raised an ambition in her tender breast, that before was a stranger to it, to glitter near a throne, though but in a tinsel splendor; for she was not ignorant he was already married, and that his Queen she could not be; tho' he often protested, if that vacancy happened, he would raise her to the dignity of the crown. He also bestowed his gold liberally on her tutoress, or woman, who had the care of her education; which so blinded her eyes, and prevailed over her conscience, that she promised him to do all that was in her power with the young lady, to further his wished for happiness. And so having given store of gold to all the servants, he took his leave of his fair mistress, with many endearing kisses, which he had no sooner done, but that he heard troubles were again risen in his territories beyond the seas, which required his presence to allay and settle:

The King soon raising a gallant army, passed into France, the terror of whose name so daunted his enemies, that they quickly fled, leaving the towns and places they had submitted to his obedience. Yet in the midst

of

Fair ROSAMOND. 15

of wars, blood and slaughter, his love prevailed, and made him write to Fair Rosamond in these words :

Fair Lady,

INSPIRED by the remembrance of your incomparable beauty, to which your King is a captive; I have nevertheless made my enemies feel the effects of my anger, and mourn in tears of blood, my hasty parting from you my charming angel, whose bright inea being still before me, made me a conqueror wheresoever I came. 'Tis you whom I hold dearer than all the glories of a crown. Permit me, fair one to assure you, my stay shall not be long; and when I return, I'll place you in a glittering sphere above the reach of those you dread. In the mean while, let a languishing King prevail in his suit, when he begs a line or two of comfort from your dear hand.

H E N R Y R.

This letter somewhat surprized the young lady, and filled her with fears and irresolutions, not well knowing how she should behave herself in so weighty a matter, nearly concerning her good name, fame and chastity; yet the glittering prospect of greatness and honour pleading on the other hand, she resolved to shew it to her tutoreſs, who had not been negligent in soliciting her to accept of the King's love and favour, as he had left directions with her to do, expecting hereby advancement to herself, if she could but be effectually instrumental in bringing it to pass.

She no sooner read the letter, but smiling in her face, said, My dear child, you may now well see that all the happy conſellations agree, that so excellent a beauty as yours, must not be enjoyed by a mean person, you are made for a Queen, and in yielding now to fortune promised, is a large step towards a throne. You may perceive a Jove is descending in a golden shower, to make you more rich and glorious than Diana, tho' she was the daughter of a King. Lay aside your blushes, and send him a comfortable answer. Let not too much modesty hinder you of so great

Fair ROSAMOND. 17

great an honour, as being the mistress of a noble King.

This made her blushes come and go, long struggling within her, till at last this crafty matron used so many pressing arguments, that she returned the following answer.

Great Sir,

I WAS with no small astonishment I read a letter subscribed with your royal name and sent to me, as I suppose from your own hand; but am altogether ignorant of any such power in me, to make a captive of my King; but could not I confess, read without some pleasure, that my Idea, as your Majesty is pleas'd to flatter me, should have an influence in making your Majesty a conqueror over your enemies. Yes, may it please your Majesty, I cannot but interest myself so much in your affairs, as to rejoice when you are victorious, and be glad of your success. But as to my being placed in a
glittering

glittering sphere, above the reach of these I dread,
 I neither understand it, nor dare I give myself the
 liberty of thinking what your Majesty's meaning
 may be therein; but as I know I deserve no such
 promotion, so neither do I desire it. And as my own
 innocency, so your Majesty's royal goodness is sufficient
 to keep me from any thing intended by it, that is in-
 comparable with the strictest rules of honour and
 virtue. And therefore praying for your Majesty's
 happiness, prosperity, and safe return, I beg leave
 with the humblest submission, to subscribe myself,

May it please your Majesty,

Your ever dutiful, and

most obedient subject,

and humble vassal,

ROSAMOND.

Having got this letter from the innocent
 young lady, she took care to send it safely to
 the

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the King, according to the directions left her, inclosing it in one writ by herself to the King, at the same time, unknown to Rosamond, which spoke the following language.

To the KING.

Dread Sovereign,

BOTH my own inclinations to serve your Majesty, as well as my duty, and your Majesty's royal bounty, has made me leave no stone unturn'd to make Fair Rosamond, hitherto inflexible virtue give place to your Majesty's pleasure: nor have the pains I have taken been altogether without effect, as your Majesty will see by the inclosed, which I have persuaded her to write to your Majesty; which being her first essay is sufficient to demonstrate, that she has no aversion for your Majesty, which tho' it seems not to promise much, yet I don't not to cultivate it to

a passion worthy of so great a Prince as your Majesty, for your Majesty will easily discern, that there are some sparks of affection couched therein, which will use all the means that lie in my power to blow up into a violent flame. For, that she may meet you with open arms, to give you that satisfaction which your Majesty so earnestly desires shall be the unwearied endeavour of,

Your Majesty's obedient,

dutiful subject and servant,

ALETHEA.

The King having received the letter, first read that of Alethea, Fair Rosamond's governess, till he came to those words, "As
"your Majesty will see by the inclosed; and then flinging that out of his hand, greedily takes up the other, which was Rosamond's, and reads it over and over; then kisses it, and reads it again; and then lays it down,
and

Fair ROSAMOND. 21

and reads out Alethea's, and then takes up Rosamond's, and reads it again. And is it so, says the King? Does Rosamond rejoice at my success, and pray for my prosperity and safe return? Then she's my own; and when I do return, I'll let her know in more endearing terms, the greatness of the passion in my breast I have, and what returns I do expect from her. And to that purpose I'll soon make an end of all that business that detains me here:

*All other love's henceforward I'll decline,
For now the rose of all the world is mine.*

Pleased with these thoughts, the King made all the haste he could to put an end to those affairs that kept him then in Normandy. But notwithstanding all endeavours to return suddenly home, the unnatural and rebellious carriage of his children, kept him much longer there than he intended.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

How Lady Clifford discovered the Love that the King had for her Daughter; and after a severe Reprimand given to Rosamond, sent her away in private. How the King having got intelligence where she was, caused her to be brought to Court, &c.



THE King's affairs keeping him in Normandy longer than he expected, and Lady Clifford going into her daughter's closet accidentally espied the King's letter to Rosamond;

Rosamond, at which being extremely surprized,
 as knowing nothing of what had passed
 between them, called her daughter to her,
 and asked her what the meaning of that let-
 ter was? Rosamond was as much surprized
 at that question, as her mother was at the
 letter, being put to such a nonplus that she
 knew not what to answer; and therefore
 made her blushes pass for one. Her lady
 mother taking her silence for an argument of
 her guilt, took the letter in her hand, and
 went immediately to her husband the Lord
 Clifford, who had a very tender love for Ro-
 samond, and shewing him the letter he was
 exceedingly disturbed thereat; and so they
 both together went to their daughter's cham-
 ber, and upbraiding her with being a strump-
 et to the King, and taking away clearly the
 comfort of their lives, who looked upon her
 as their chiefest treasure, she kneeled down
 upon her knees, and solemnly protested to
 them, that she was still a pure and unblem-
 ished virgin, and that she never yet had given
 up herself unto the King's embraces, or those
 of any other person whatsoever. This so-
 lemn

lemn protestation that she made, somewhat appeased her father's anger, who was afraid it had been worse; and seeing that she persisted in the truth of what she said, he bid her for the satisfaction of his mind, to tell the naked truth, and let him know how it was she came by such a letter. To which she answered thus :

“ My lord and father, I must confess the King has made love to me, nor could I well avoid the hearing of it, for when he was so nobly treated here, how could I chuse but entertain him civilly; and tho' I must confess he gave me several jewels of great value, I thought they only were the testimonies of that respect he paid to your daughter, and not of any love he had to me, till the last day I saw him, and then indeed he told me, That if his Queen should die, no other person under Heaven should fill her place but me. But I excused myself, if ever it should happen so, as being a poor silly maid, and far unfit for such a Prince's bed, nor did I hear more of him, until within this fortnight, this letter was presented to me by an unknown hand, as I was going to the Chapel,

not

Fair ROSAMOND. 25

not knowing it was from the King till I had read it, which whilst I was doing, the messenger withdrew himself. And now, my honoured father, I do desire to know wherein I am a criminal, unless it be in not acquainting you I had received a letter from him?

Her father having heard her, thus replied,
 ' My only child, my dearest Rosamond, the staff and comfort of thy father's age, I am glad to find thou still art innocent: let me advise thee child, to have a care, and keep thyself unspotted as thou art: gaze not too much on the bright sun of honour, lest it should make thee blind to thy own destruction; for shouldst thou come to glitter near the throne it would be only with a faint reflection, that would have in it neither life nor heat. What honour would it be to have it said, That Rosamond's King Henry's concubine, and for unlawful love has lost her virtue? Consider, child, if chastity be gone, there's nothing less praise-worthy in a woman: pride not thyself in being beautiful, it is falsely called so, if thou art not chaste; for though thy body appear ne'er so fair, yet
 D without

without chastity, it cannot be beautiful. Beauty is like the flowers of the spring, fair to the sight, yet quickly fade away; but chastity is like the stars of Heaven, that always shine with a refulgent brightness. There is a difference between love and lust, for one is as far distant from the other, as Heaven is from Hell. And all the King's addressees unto thee, are the effects of lust and not of love, he has a Queen to whom his love is due; and think what jealous rage will fill her breast when she shall know thou rob'st her of the King. For jealousy is a Hell to the mind, and a terror to the conscience, suppressing reason, and inciting rage. Think then, my child, what it is thou canst expect in thy unlawful love, or rather lust: thou wilt be sure to lose thy virtue, and honour, thy chastity, thy reputation, and which is more, perhaps, thy life; and which is most of all, thy soul without repentance. If therefore thou wilt change thy virgin-state I will take care to get a husband for thee, with whom thou mayest live honestly; and that perhaps may be a means to quench that fire of lust thy beauty may have kindled in the
King,

King, and make thee safe, and us thy parents easy.

Fair Rosamond gave great attention to her father's words, assuring them with great assurances, that she would to the utmost of her power, avoid whatever should be displeasing to them. But that as to the changing her condition, she humbly did desire to be excused, for that she had a mind to live a virgin.

Her mother thereupon said, Rosamond, it would be much more to my satisfaction, and to your father's too, to see you married, for then I could believe you out of danger; and you well know Lord Fitz Walters has a passion for you, a nobleman of an illustrious family, as wealthy too as most Lords in the kingdom; your father would be glad of such a son-in-law, and so should I to see you so well married; and therefore do not stand in your own light, lest you thereby do make us both believe you have too great a kindness for the king.

To this Rosamond answered, She should be willing to give them all the satisfaction

they desired, but hoped they would not put her upon courting Lord Fitz Walters, how ever well accomplished he might be ; but that it was enough for her to entertain him when he came to court her. Her father told her as to that, he would take care that all things should be managed to her satisfaction ; but when he came to court her, he expected that she should treat him as a person worthy of her love, for he should measure the duty that she paid to him, by the respect she gave to that young gentleman. To which she only answered, She hoped she should in no respect be wanting in her duty.

But while the good Lord Clifford and his Lady were pleased in their design'd disposal of their daughter, King Henry was returned from Normandy, having concluded all his business there, and made peace with France, and with his sons. This made Fair Rosamond very indifferent to Lord Fitz Walters, who by permission of her father, courted her, so that she told him plainly, she had a greater kindness for him, than to expose him to the King's resentments : For she was sure whoever courted her, must undergo the anger of the

the King. And this was such a blow to the young Lord, as quickly cool'd his courage, for that he had no mind to have the King his rival. But e're he went away, he told her father how he had been dismiss'd by Rosamond, who then perceiving there was no trusting unto what she said, resolv'd to take another course with her, and save her from impending ruin, tho' against her will, and to that end in two days time, order'd a coach and horses to be ready, and every thing prepar'd for a long journey; and calling then for Alethea, fair Rosamond's false governess of whom they then had not the least mistrust, told her, their thoughts of the King's love to Rosamond, and to what misery it would expose her to, (at which she shew'd a most extream surprize) and told her, that in order to prevent it, they would have her married to Lord Fitz Water, who, as she knew had lately courted her; and then in what a manner she dismiss'd him. And here Alethea, thought it time for her to speak a little, lest too much silence should betray her falsehood; and therefore told them, She often wonder'd why she treated that young nobleman with

so much coolness, as she had seen her do. And once, said she, I took occasion to tell her of it. Madam, said I, I think you treat your lover but indifferently. As he deserves, said she to me. Deserves! said I, I think Lord Fitz Walters deserves a lady of the greatest fortune in the kingdom, because his person and estate will answer it. Your judgment and mine differs Alethea, said she to me again; besides I think my beauty may deserve more than another's fortune, altho' my own is not contemptible. In short, I do expect a better husband.

O Alethea! said the old Lord to her, it was the King that Rosamond intended. Ambition has the ascendant of her soul, and nought will serve her but the King's embraces. This is the thing that we would now prevent, and, honest Alethea, thou must help us in it, and therefore you and she, to-morrow morning, must with all privacy imaginable depart from hence to Cornwall, unto a kinsman's there, near to Lanceslon, there she may live in private undiscovered, until the King's affections are diverted,

diverted, and placed upon some other meretricious beauty. And for your care in attending of her, and watching of her waters, as we say, thou shalt not only have our thanks, but be well rewarded also.

I will be sure, said she, to do my duty, and think you take the wisest course to save your daughter both from shame and ruin.

With that, the good old Lord presented her with some broad pieces of old gold, as a reward, as he thought, of her faithfulness. And the next morning, Rosamond and her governess, or woman, coach'd it away for Cornwall, and in a few days came to her kinsman's house, where they were well received.

But when the wolf is set to keep the sheep, they are not very long like to be safe: For Alethea, bribed largely by King Henry, was all this while the grand intreaguer in this love affair, who took an opportunity of sending to the King a large account of all things that had passed, and how far they were sent to take the air, and she to watch her.

King

King Henry having this intelligence, and thereby understanding how things went, resolved to have her out of all their hands; and thereupon sent for her uncle to come to him presently; who being come, he told him he had a piece of service to command him in, which he would expect to be most punctually obeyed. Her uncle told him, he hoped he would not question his allegiance, nor the performance of his duty to him; and therefore humbly did beseech his Majesty to let him know what service it was to do.

It is, said the King to go immediately to Cornwall, where at your kinsman's near Lankeston, you'll find your beautiful kinswoman Fair Rosamond, present her with this jewel from me, and use your best endeavour to bring her to my Court, without her parent's knowledge.

Her uncle seemed a little startled at a command so far from what he did expect:

expect: which when the King observed, Ha, my Lord, said he, have I shocked you then? Wher's your allegiance now?

Here in my heart, replied her uncle, where it has always been, of which your Majesty shall soon be satisfied by my obedience. For he was loth the King should think he was unwilling to obey him, lest he should thereby incur his displeasure, and run the risque of having those great offices he held under the King took from him. It was only for the sake of those he undertook the ungrateful service which the King imposed upon him.

Having received the King's commands, away he goes to Cornwall, where finding of his kinswoman, according as the King had told him, he made as if he called there by accident, having come down about some other business; then told her how exceeding glad he was to find her there. And after

after some jocose discourse together, asked her if she'd go up with him to Court, for he was sure the King would make her welcome: which, tho' he only spoke to feel her pulse, he found her willing to accept his offer; and without any more to do, provided for her journey a very noble chariot, and so attended with her governess, and a few trusty servants, he brought her to the court, and put her in those private lodgings which were before appointed by the King for her reception.

Her uncle having acquainted the King that she was come, and how he had disposed of her, he came that very night to give her a visit.

And seeing now that beauty in its full bloom, which was but blooming when he saw her last, he was surprized with wonder and amazement: and Rosamond, knowing it was the King, as she was kneeling down upon her knees, he

runs

Fair ROSAMOND. 33

runs and takes her up, with this exordium :

O fairest of creatures under Heaven !
kneel not to me, for thy excelent beanty,
command all knees and hearts to bow
to thee: then kissed her, as if he
would have sucked away her breath.
welcome to me, said he, my sweetest
rose: wellcome to Henry's court, my
dearest Rosamond: all hear my Roso-
mond is at thy command; for I no
servant have but what is thine. Then
say, my sweetest rose, what is it here
that thou wilt ask of Henry !

Then being silent, as expecting her
reply, Rosamond answered thus :

Under the frowns of my offended
parents I beg protection at your royal
hand, and that within your court I may
be free.

Free, said the King: Alas, my Rosa-
mond, 'tis I have reason to make that
petition,

petition; for you have long since made
your King a captive.

Pardon me, gracious severeign,
reply'd Rosamond, for if I've guilty
been of such a crime, I'm sure it was
a sin of ignorance.

To which the King replied, 'Ah Rosamond! you've made me captive, but without a crime; for 'tis your beauty has inthrawled my heart; that wondrous beauty that's without parallel. And as for that protection which you beg, King Henry tells you, that you may command it, and it is the highest reason that you should. But tell me, Rosamond, wherein would you, whose very thoughts are always pure and chaste, unto your parents give the least offence?

Dread Sir, replied Fair Rosamond again, my very being here is an offence, I came into your court without their
leave,

leave, and for that reason your protection ask.

To which the King returned, I have already said, you shall command it. But sure, continued he, your parents were in the wrong, to hinder you from coming to the court. Where should the peerless son of beauty shine, but at the court, its true meridian? And to shut up those beams within a corner that should enlighten and irradiate the whole kingdom, must needs be a great error. However, Rosamond, here you are safe; for any he, let him be whom he will, may as well take the crown from off my head, or pluck me from the throne whereon I sit, as offer the least injury to you, and I will as much resent it.

To which Fair Rosamond only replied, thank your gracious Majesty, and will henceforth esteem myself secure under your promised protection.

This discourse having pass'd, a short

E

collation

collation ensued, wherein the King shewed himself extremely pleased, and Rosamond herself seemed very well contented. After supper the King told her That in regard of the fatigues of her journey, he would give her no farther disturbance that night, but would suddenly visit her again, and so charging her uncle to have a particular regard to her, and see that she wanted nothing she desired, he took his leave of her for that time.

Alethea, who was her governess, was with her still, and did all she could to persuade her to yield to the King's embraces. But Rosamond, seemed averse to it, what her father had before said to her, running in her mind. However, she dressed herself with all the gallantry imaginable, according to the mode of that age, and the King having made her a present of some very rich jewels, she wore them all, to make herself appear more beautiful and glorious: Tho' to speak truth, her native beauty

beauty was sufficient, without any helps from art, to charm the greatest monarch in the world.

And now the King, who had two or three times visited Rosamond as a friend, began to be impatient of delay, and thought it was high time to have some close conversation with her. And therefore coming one evening to see her, (for he generally visited her in an evening, for the greater privacy) he accosted her in these terms,

I have hitherto flattered myself, my sweetest Rosamond, that you have had a kindness for me, but now I begin to find I was mistaken; for I too plainly see you have no regard for me.

How, said Rosamond, somewhat surprised, can your majesty think I have no regard for my protector, under whose royal court I live here secretly? If I have any way been wanting in my duty, or given your Majesty just occa-

sion for such thoughts, pray let me know it, that I may better pay your Majesty the duty that I owe you. But notwithstanding what you have been pleased to say, I hardly can believe your Majesty does think so.

How is it possible, replied he, I can think otherwise, when I have been your captive, and yet you never go about to set me free? I have often told you that you have wounded me, and yet you never go about to apply that sovereign balm, by which my wounds are only capable of being cured. And is not this next to a demonstration that you have but little kindness for me?

To this fair Rosamond, with blushes that still rendered her more fair, replied as follows, Your Majesty is pleased to speak to me in figures, but I am but a simple maid, and cannot understand them. So far you seem to me from being captive, that you appear the only man that's free. For were it otherwise,

I would make myself a captive to procure your liberty, if that could do it. And did I see you wounded, if my own blood could cure you, you should have it. Therefore, great Sir, I would not have you charge me so unjustly: For whilst you are at liberty, and well, I do not see in what it is that I can serve your Majesty.

To this, fetching a sigh, the King made this reply, Ah, Rosamond! I know you understand me well enough; but who's more blind than they that will not see: But since you force me to speak plainly, Know it is your beauty that has wounded me; and it is your charms makes me a captive to you, love calls for love; nor can my wounds be cured without enjoyment. If therefore you have that regard for me, your words would seem to intimate, shew that is real, by admitting me to your embraces and granting me the full fruition of your love.

E 3

Rosamond

Rosamond seemed extremely disordered at what the King said last, and rising up was going to kneel down, but the King would not suffer her, but plucked her up again and said, Kneel not, my dearest Rosamond, it is I should kneel to thee. I only ask——

Here Rosamond interrupting him, said, Ask for my life, Great Sir, and you shall have it, or any thing that's in my power to give. But ask not for my honour, nor to give up my virgin jewel, for that's so precious and so valuable I can never part with it, but to a husband. My outward form is but the casket only; it is virtue is the jewel, and when that is gone, what worth is the other? Not a poor peasant would esteem of that; much less is it a present for a King. Nor would your Majesty, if I should part with it, regard me afterwards but as a strumpet. She that has lost her honour, is but a faded flower, how gay soever she appeared before; and like a clouded diamond, of no value. It is virtue only is the precious jewel that ever shines with an unclouded lustre.—— And then kneeling down, said thus, Then

let

let me beg you, Sir, to ask no more, for that which I can never grant; but to a husband.

The king was mightily surpris'd to hear such words from Rosamond, of whom he thought he should have made an easy conquest, and was as much in love with her good parts and virtue, as he was with her beauty. But as he knew stones with continual dropping of the water wear away, so he never doubted but with repeated solicitations, he might at last overcome this stubborn beauty. And therefore unobtrusive she had last said, he thus replied,

Think not, my Rosamond, that it is lust which makes me to solicit for enjoyment; no, no, my love is no such smoaky fire, but burns as clear as vessels at the altar; nor would I, as you say, receive that gift which virtue could not give me. Kings have you know, a peculiar prerogative, and move in spheres above the common rank. Their privilege it is to have many wives, when subjects are by law confined to one. And therefore

therefore tho' my Eleanor be Queen, yet Rosamond shall reign as well as she, and ever in my heart command as chief. We will be married first, my Rosamond, and then I hope you will not scruple it.

I know not, Sir, said Rosamond, whether or no it be a lawful thing to marry one that has a wife already; but if that can be proved, I have nothing to object, for I have no aversion to your person; nay let me tell you, I have a value for you above others; both as you are a man, and much more as you are my King and Sovereign.

The King then gave her several kisses, with many promises to make her happy, if she agreed to what he had proposed. And having left Rosamond, goes to Alethea, her governess, for whom he had yet a great respect, and told her what repulses he had met withal from Rosamond, instead of that enjoyment he expected. Alethea as one that was case-hardened in wickedness, told the King, That if his Majesty pleased to follow her humble advice, he should not enter into

any

any further parties with her, but that he should find a far nearer way to the happiness he desired; for as to being married, it would be both a dilatory thing, and of no avail, when it was done, as she intended to inform Rosamond,

But what is the way then that you would advise to, said the King to her.

May it please your Majesty, said Alethea, the way that I would have you to take, is this, that you should come into my chamber To-morrow night, a little before bed-time; and I will leave you there alone awhile, till I have got my Lady Rosamond to bed; and whereas I lie with her every night, I will delay the time of my going to bed, as I sometimes do till she is asleep, and then I will bring your Majesty into the chamber, and you shall go to bed to her in my stead, and I doubt not but before the morning light, your Majesty will so well satisfy her, that all her anger will be over; and for the future your admittance will be easy.

The

The King was very well pleased with this contrivance of Alethea, and as a token thereof, presented her with a rich diamond ring, and told her, he would follow her advice, and be with her incognito the next night:

Alethea going afterwards to Rosamond, she told her what had passed between the King and her, and how the King had promised to marry her: and asked whether such a marriage would stand good? Alethea told her no; and that it would but enrage Queen Eleanor the more against her; for said she, Kings may indeed be allowed concubines, but not more wives than one; and tho' concubines are not married, yet are they counted next in honour to the Queen, and take place of all the nobility.

Rosamond was pretty well pleased to hear this, for ambition had a great ascendant in her soul: she was willing to be great, but loath to be thought a whore:

where: and therefore could not tell how to brook the thoughts of the King's lying with her; and therefore had a mind to have gone back again to Cornwall, rather than suffer herself to be deflowered by the King. But Alethea told her she was safe enough where she was, and to be sure the King would do nothing to displease her. Whereupon she resolved to wait, and see what would be the issue of her last conference with the King.

The next evening the King came to Alethea according to his time, to whom Alethea told what discourse she had had with Rosamond; and how she had talked of going back into the country: but, I hope, said she, your Majesty will make her of another mind before to-morrow morning.

You may be sure, said the King, I won't be wanting on my part. And thereupon Alethea went to get Rosamond to bed, as she was want to do:
and

and in about an hour's time, which the King's impatience of delay made him think an age, she came back again to the King, and told him, that if he pleased to follow her, she would bring him where Rosamond was a-bed and asleep.

The King needed no persuasions to follow her, but went with her immediately to her chamber; there soon disrobed himself; and Alethea, taking her leave of him, left him to manage his business with Rosamond, according to his own discretion.

The King having shut the door, and locked it after Alethea, went into bed to Rosamond, who was fast asleep, not dreaming of the treacherous part that Alethea played. The King not willing presently to wake his charming mistress, lay still; but, lying closer to her than Alethea used to do, she waked of herself, and not knowing but it was Alethea that was in her bed, I prithee, Governess,

Governess, said she, for so she used to call her, and such she thought she was, lie further off a little, you crowd so close, as if you'd thrust me out of bed,

And now the King thought it proper time to speak to her, and let her know who was her bed-fellow: and thereupon bespake her thus: My dearest Rosamond, It is not your governess, it is your King that lies so close to you, (and thereupon embraced her in his arms) and sure you need not fear that I would thrust you out of bed.

It is not easy to imagine how great was the surprize that Rosamond was in at this discovery; and fain she would have gotten out of bed, but the King held her fast, and would not let her go.

O Sir, said she, I could not think you would have served me thus, when you assured me, that in your court I should be safe and free.

F

Yes

Yes, said the King, I know I promised it; and you shall find, that to a tittle, I will make good my word, for you shall be as free and safe as ever.

If it be so, said Rosamond, pray let me go, and give me leave to rise.

No, said the King, then I should break my word, you cannot be more safe than in my arms; for now I am sure nothing can injure you.

O, Sir, consider, she replied again, what can be more injurious to poor Rosamond, than thus to have her honour taken from her.

Your honour, said the King! I am the fountain of all honour here; and what I take, I can restore again. Nor can, what I shall do, be in the least imputed unto you; for it is I alone am the aggressor, and therefore if it be a fault, it is wholly mine; you are but passive in it.

Come

*Come then thou rose o' th' world, be no more coy,
 But love's delights let's mutually enjoy:
 The precious minutes let's no longer waste,
 But love's delicious sweets let's free y taste.
 The night will all thy conscious blushes hide,
 Imagine now that thou art Henry's bride,
 W'ho'll thee prefer 'fore all the world beside.*

Rosamond now found resistance would be in vain, and that since things were gone so far, she had better oblige the King, than to deny him that which he would take whether she would or no. And thereupon, without resisting any farther, suffered the King to do what he pleased; which pleased the King so well, that before the morning light appeared, he pleased fair Rosamond also; and their pleasing embraces at last left them asleep in one another's arms, until the sun peeped in to see what they were doing, which having first awakened Fair Rosamond, she was surprised to find herself naked in the King's arms, which summed up the blood into her face, and added a fresh beauty to her charms. The King perceiving her somewhat disorder'd, gave her good words to keep her spirits

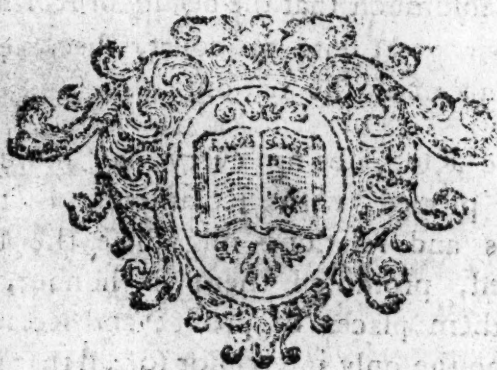
up, saying, My Rosamond, as thou hast thus obliged me, doubt not but I will be always true to thee. Thou shalt want nothing in my power to give. Thou hast made me happy, tho' against thy will, and to requite thee I will willingly make thee so, if all that I possess is capable of doing it. And thereupon sealing his promises with many kisses, he once more quenched his amorous flames with substantial joys.

For a time these two happy lovers often met and enjoyed their wanton dalliances in private; but the envy of some court ladies, to whom the King had been wont to shew the same kindness finding themselves now neglected for this peerless beauty, being filled with revenge and indignation, did by their secret whispers soon spread abroad the King's familiarity with Rosamond, not only in the court, but country also, so that the Lord Clifford and his lady, Rosamond's father and mother, heard it with much grief; and those that had been her suitors, were almost distracted, seeing they had irreparably lost their hopes of enjoying so precious a jewel, seeing she was now mounted on so high a
pinacle

pinacle of Honour, that she was got above their reach. And the King, who knew his love to be no longer a secret, not only smiled at the complaints, and bitter reproaches of his jealous Queen, but caused his fair mistress to be so sumptuously attired, appointing servants to attend and wait upon her where-ever she went; so that being decked in silks, and gold embroideries, and Gems, she dazzled the eyes of all beholders, who could easily distinguish between Fair Rosamond and all the other beauties of the court, she as far outshining them, as the bright beams of Phoebus, outvies pale Cynthia's light, insomuch that the beauty of Rosamond and her great state at court, became the table talk of all the nation.

The King, being every day more and more pleased with Rosamond, that her friends and relations might be the better satisfied, promoted them to honour, and gave them places of profit; and Rosamond became the only intercessor for all that wanted any thing to be done at Court; for whatever favour she asked, she was sure not to be denied. By which she not only advanced

and relieved many decayed families; but stood between death, and such as had the King's displeasure, saving many that were condemned to die; and in all things she used those good offices with her enamoured sovereign, as gained her a general good esteem, especially amongst the ordinary sort of people, whose loud shouts and general acclamations declared their satisfaction.



C H A P. V.

How Queen Eleanor plotted to destroy Fair Rosamond, to prevent which she was removed to a stately Bower at Woodstock: how the Queen to further her cruel design, caused her son Richard to war against his father in Normandy.



QUEEN Eleanor growing outrageous, when she perceived no kind words nor intreaties, mixed with threats, could wean the King her husband's love from his new mistress; and

and though he laboured other ways all he could to please and pacify her, yet she set her engines on work to fright her from his arms, and for the safety of her life enclose herself in a nunnery, which according to those superstitious times was held so sacred and inviolable that whoever entered it, could not be taken out again; no, not by the King, without committing sacrilege, and incurring the Pope's curse. But Fair Rosamond shewing him some letters, threatening her destruction, that were dropped in her lodgings on purpose for her to find and read, thereby to terrify and offright her from his arms; such enquiry was made about it, that some of those that had done it, were discovered by similitude of hands, and severely punished, and many of the ladies, who spoke distractedly of her, and gave her affronts, were banished the Court; insomuch, that at length, perceiving the King was in earnest, resolutely bent to defend his fair one, they gave over any further projects of this nature, and to prevent violence, he appointed her a guard to wait on her at home and abroad; and to remove her further from

from the Queen's sight, that her envy and continual clamours, if possible, might cease, he caused a stately palace, called, The delightful bower of Woodstock, in Oxfordshire, to be built with great cost, with all the cunning turnings and windings imaginable, far exceeding the Dedalian Labyrinth, which he appointed for her country retirement, when she please to take the air.

This stately bower had many entries and passages under ground, into which light came thro' narrow stone crevices, shaded with bushes not perceivable to those that walked above, rising with doors in hills far distant, to escape from danger, upon any timely notice though the place should suddenly be besieged and surrounded; and within this stately bower were intricate mazes and windings thro' long entries, rooms and galleries, strongly secured with a hundred and fifty doors, so that to find the way out, and into the most remote apartments, the skilful artist had left a silver clew of thread, without the guidance of which, it was next to impossible to be done. About this bower were
curious.

curious gardens, fountains, and a wilderness, with all manner of delights for pleasant situation, and recreation, to furnish it out as another earthly paradise, for so fair a creature to inhabit, and thither the king often resorted to see his beloved Rosamond.

But this more vexed the enraged Queen, not only that she should have so famous a place built on purpose for her, but that the King staid whole weeks in his visits, and left her to lie tumbling and tossing in much perplexity, whilst another enjoyed the embraces she expected; wherefore she consulted with her sons, now men grown, how to be revenged, and after many things argued and considered, it was agreed amongst them, that Prince Richard, afterwards King of England, should go over and join with the French, to raise war against his father in Normandy, then belonging to the crown of England, which whilst he effected, speedily would withdraw the King to aid his subjects, and subdue his enemies, and so leaving his fair mistress behind him, and Rosamond being destitute of her chief defence, might lie

Fair ROSAMOND. 59

lie open to their plots and contrivances against her life, which while he was present would be frustrated. Nor was Prince Richard slow in this, but made a fierce war, beat the King's Lieutenant, and took many towns, which news coming to the King's ear, roused him as a lion from his lair, and filled him with princely resolution of revenge. It is true indeed, those different passions of revenge and lust, long struggled in his breast; but love at last gave place unto his honour, vowing his love should make revenge more sharp. And therefore he resolved to pass the sea with a well-disciplined and royal army.



CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

How the King took his leave of Fair Rosamond, to pass the seas, and the great sorrow she made for his Departure, with his comfortable words to her. How he left her in the care of her uncle, and went to fight against his haughty Foes; &c.



THIS Resolution of the King, by
by means of the Keeper of her bow-
er, came to the Ears of Rosamond, and
was received with an inexpressible grief.
Her soul was filled with mourning, to
hear

hear it; her heart was turned a wardrobe of true passion; the rosy dye that deck'd her blushing cheeks grew pale, and clouds im-
mured the muffled skies of her resplendent beauty: so great her sorrow was, it even made the stars for pity drop down from the spheres, and Cynthia in gloomy vale of darkness, inshroud the pale beams of her borrowed light: had but Queen Eleanor beheld her now, her envy would have fallen fast asleep, and cruelty herself have fell weeping.

The King however, firm to his resolves, being just ready to depart for Normandy, went last of all to take his leave of fair Rosamond; and to assure her of his love and kindness, Rosamond had some notice of his coming, and of the errand he was come about: and straight her eyes grew dim, and down upon the ground she forthwith fell; and every object danced before her in the maze of death: her eyes were closed, and tho' she sat in darkness, without the help of the light, her beauty shined.

The King came in, and found her on the floor, in all the storm of grief; sighing such breaths of sorrow, that her lips, which late appeared like buds, were now over-blown; and when she came a little to herself, she

poured forth tears at such a lavish rate, that
 were the world on fire, they might have
 drowned the wrath of Heaven, and quenced
 the mighty ruin. 'T would raise the pity of a
 marble breast, to see the tears force thro' her
 snowy lids, and lodge themselves on her red
 murmuring lips, which after a small respite,
 faintly said, Ah, dearest Prince! how cruel is
 unkind fortune unto lovers, that we must so
 soon part: and my presaging soul forebodes
 never to meet again in this world, if now you
 leave me to the irreconcilable hatred of my
 merciless enemy, quite void of your royal
 shelter and protection: O for this, did I re-
 sign my self into your arms, and gave up my
 virgin Innocency, and unspotted treasure to
 your will and pleasure! O is there no English
 general trust and valiant enough to defeat
 and scourge your rebels, but must you be se-
 parated from your faithful constant Rosamond,
 and venture your precious life, which is now
 dearer to me than my own, and all the valu-
 able things in this world.

She would have proceeded, but a mighty
 sorrow for a time stoped the utterance of her
 voice, and she had fallen to the ground, had
 not the King catched her in his arms, tenderly
 embracing her, and kissing her wan and faded
 cheeks

cheeks and lips a thousand times : then setting her down by him ; he said, fairest of creatures, thou fairest and most fragrant rose of all the world, afflict me not thus with thy tears ; but dearest Rosamond, at my entreaty let them cease to flow, and let not such a mighty sorrow impair thy lovely beauties ; you are not ignorant how often I have been victorious over these very enemies that now presume to dare me forth to their destruction ; I cannot but confess indeed, I am grieved to part with my sweet rose ; but adverse fortune proves an enemy to us both, in constraining this unkind separation ; but no doubt my return will be speedy, with success, and then the laurel of victory I shall gain by dint of sword shall crown my fairest mistress, and make her smile when we meet again to renew our joys and delight. In the meanwhile, my precious jewel, I will wear thee on my heart ; nor shall the rude Alarms of the war drive the image thence.

To this Rosamond, with tears still flowing, and snowy arms cast about his neck, replied, and why may not I go with my so much-loved Lord ? I'll dress me like a page, and wait on you in all your dangers ; and when in the heat of fight your precious life

is in distress, by the threatening sword and spear, I will boldly step between; and by receiving the wounds that threatens you, guard your life with the loss of my own: wait on you in your tent, and dress your food in day, and at night I'll make your princely bed soft and easy to you; and take delight to do you all the pleasure that I can: O take me with you for there is no such safety in the world for me, as in your royal camp; but waiting you, my life is death. She would have proceeded, but the King stopp'd her voice with many tender kisses, and interrupting her, said, my fairest rose, you are not fit to brook the toils of war, ladies cannot endure the fatigues and hardships of camps, soft peace and delightful pleasures, are most agreeable to their sweet tempers, therefore you must stay in England's peaceful and pleasant soil till I return. Then calling to him Sir Thomas, her uncle, the trusty knight, who had first given him an account of her rare beauty, she said, liege, worthy knight, I commit this inestimable Treasure to your sole care and conduct, my fair Rosamond; a treasure far more valuable than a kingdom; take to you a strong guard for her defence, and be careful, I charge you, as you tender your Life, that

none be permitted to see her tell my return.
 And expect, my fair mistress, I shall often
 write to you, and require your answers. Alas,
 said she, this parting's worse than death; and
 I'm afraid my death will be the fatal hide of
 it. I'm sure the soul and body cannot part
 with so great pain, as now I part with you; fain
 would I spake the last farewell, but cannot,
 there are so many deaths in that I may know
 my grief; for grief's but guess'd, while you
 are standing by: but too soon shall know
 what absence is: 'tis the sun's parting from
 the frozen north, while I stand looking on
 some ley cliff, to watch the alt love-circles
 that he makes, till he sinks down from hea-
 ven. Ah, Rosamond reply'd the King to
 her, methinks there are such mournful success
 in parting, that I could hang for ever on thy
 arms, and look away my life into thy eyes.
 But I have far to go, and must hasten. And
 so have I, said Rosamond again, if death be
 far, for that's the stage to which I now am
 going; from whence I never, never shall re-
 turn. And so in tears parted from each
 other.

FAIR, but disconsolate poor Rosamond, gave a long look after the King when he had parted from her; and

Now upon the King's departing the land, the Queen called a consult to debate the destruction of Fair Rosamond: how she laid an ambush near the bower, and training out the Knight, who guarded it, slew him and many others, when getting the silver clue, the Queen found Fair Rosamond arrayed like an angel, and compelled her to drink a bowl of poison, of which she died.



FAIR, but disconsolate poor Rosamond, gave a long look after the King, when he had parted from her; and

and just as he was out of sight, (as if her sorrowful forboding soul had told her she should never see him more, she with a dismal heart-piercing cry, threw herself down upon her couch, and fell into a swoon; from which, when her attendants had recovered her, she so oft fainted, that her maids had much ado to keep life in her; but when she was recovered, she gave herself up to sorrow and melancholy refusing to be comforted for some weeks, her sleep still going from her; and when she slumbered a little, she started, crying out, O save me, save me, here's the Queen; she's got to me at last; and with the fright awaked, and was terrified with her dreams. Nor was it without reason that Rosamond was thus afflicted in her mind, for all this while Queen Eleanor was plotting her Destruction: which to effect, she first proposed it to some favourites, whom she had raised from a low condition to a high promotion; but they started at it, as a thing full of danger, seeing if it were known, their lives would surely be forfeited, and lost at the King's

re-

return, unless they fled the land, and left all behind them, to the ruin of themselves and families. This so enraged the jealous Queen that she reviled them with a thousand reproaches of cowardise and ingratitude, for the many favours she had heaped upon them, which, with some persuasions and large offers, prevailed so far with several of her domesticks that they vowed to stand by her in any dangerous attempt, if she would but vouchsafe to be present at the doing of it: that so, if it were discovered she being the co-^{for}royal, would easily come off from the danger of the law, and they sheltered under the necessity of positive commands, might have a more coloured pretence and excuse for having a hand in the matter; to this she readily consented; and it being in summer-time, undertook a progress, as she gave out for her health, appointed at a set time, her conspirators to hide themselves in a cave near the tower, overshadowed with trees and bushes, and at the sound of a horn to rush out and do

as she commanded; which they swore to observe; whereupon she counterfeited a letter, as from the King, to fair Rosamond, and being near the bower, she hid herself in a grove, and sent one of her pages dressed as a post, to deliver it to Sir Thomas, the keeper of the bower, and no other hand for such was the King's expresse command; and when he had delivered it, immediately to blow his horn.

This cunning device took to her wish, for the too credulous knight, seeing as he thought, only a post-boy, and the spy from the turret, who watched the roads, informing they were clear of any people, he came without the gate, when immediately upon the signal given, those in ambush rushed upon him, with them he fought valiantly, being seconded by his guard; but after many were slain on both sides, being over-powered by numbers, he was likewise slain himself. The fight being over, and the gate seized by her party, the Queen came to the palace, and getting the silver clew, she entered the bower.

She

She then caused all her servants to be slain, and in the furthest retirement, in a fair chamber gilded and shining with gold, she found the beauteous Rosamond, the object of her hellish spleen, all dazzling in robes of silver, adorned with gems, shining bright like an angel; at which sight she sometime stood amazed, and began to melt into pity; but her jealousy soon reviving the flame of fury, with a stern countenance, she said, have I found thee, thou graceless wretch! who by the lewdness hast shamefully taken my husband from me? Come, lay aside your gaudy trappings, and receive the reward due to such as commit crimes like yours.

Fair Rosamond, seeing the angry Queen before her, and hearing these dreadful words, trembled from head to foot, when rising from her seat, she fell on her knees before her, imploring mercy and pardon for her offences; with a flood of tears, begging she would have pity on her tender Years, and pardon a crime she was constrained to act, and she would immediately clois-

cloister herself in a Nunnery, and see the King no more, or else abjure the land: And if she had not deserved to live, yet she besought her in mercy and tender compassion to the infant that struggled in her womb she might live, tho' in a dungeon, till she was delivered, and then she would willingly submit to die so that it might be saved alive.

This last request, which she concluded would move some pity, the more incensed the enraged Queen; for hearing she was with child, her fury broke forth beyond all moderation; when, snatching up a golden bowl which stood on the table, she poured a draught of deadly poison into it, which she had brought with her, commanding her, laying all excuses aside, to drink it up immediately, at which she trembled, and begged mercy with tears, the queen pulled out a dagger and held it to her breast, saying, You harlot, what are you queefy stomach'd? If your dainty pallate cannot relish poison, see here, I have Steel for your panting breasts, to rip you out of the world.

The

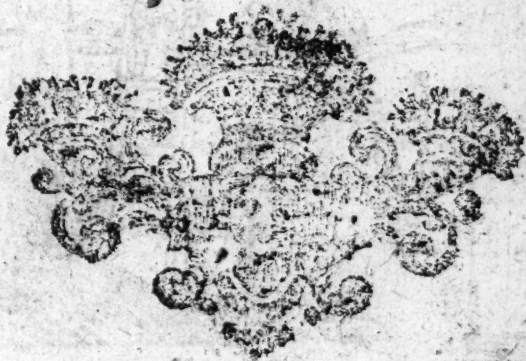
The poor sorrowful lady perceiving there was no remedy, but she must die, stood upon her feet, and with abundance of tears, and piteously wringing her hands, begged mercy of God for her youthful sins and failings, desiring that all stately beauties might be warned by her sad fall, not to be proud nor aspiring, but rather contented with a lowly safe condition, and often calling for mercy, she with her trembling hand put the bowl to her mouth, and drank the Poison, which soon put an end to her life; and the Queen caused her to be buried privately with the rest that were slain, and so departed, rejoicing in the success her revenge had had on her rival, but little considered the misery it would pull on her own head.

Other historians of great credit relate the circumstances of her death in the following manner, viz. That the Fair Rosamond, sitting to take the air, let fall out of her lap a clue of silk, which running from her, the end of the silk fastened to her foot, and the clue still unwinding, remained behind,

which

Fair ROSAMOND. 73

which the Queen espying, followed, till she had found what she sought: it is generally said, That when the Queen came to Rosamond, she presented her with a dagger, and a cup of poison, bidding her take her choice, and she taking the last er, soon expired therewith. Others say, that when the Queen saw her, being amazed at her beauty, she only upbraided her with her unlawful familiarity with the King, and so left her: Rosamond telling her, she would never be guilty of that fault again. But Rosamond lived but a short time after, however that was, certain it is, that the Queen had made her that visit.



C H A P. VIII.

How the King returned, heard of Rosamond's Death, and the Lamentation he made, and the severe Revenge he took in putting many to Death, and imprisoning his Queen for her Life, building a famous Sepulchre for Fair Rosamond, and soon after died himself, &c.



NOT long after the untimely death of Fair Rosamond, the King who had many strange dreams concerning her, returned

Fair ROSAMOND. 75

turned home victorious; but no sooner had he notice of her tragical end, but his joy was turned into mourning, and in a kind of distraction he rent his royal robes, shut himself up in his chamber, and would suffer none to speak with him for many days, often weeping and crying out, "O my Rosamond, my fairest flower! how art thou blasted by a cruel death, and with thee all my joys are faded and withered? O thy parting tears presaged this sad event that we should meet no more! O that I had staid to defend thee from this ruin, tho' at the loss of a country, nay, to the eclipsing my own fame and renown.

When the King had a little eased his grief, he summoned his judges, and commanded them to make a strict enquiry after those that were guilty of these heinous crimes, who fearing his high displeasure, were so diligent therein, that most of them were apprehended, tried, and put to several the most cruel deaths, who in their tortures accused the Queen, and laid the blame on her, who was not able to bear out herself, for so fierce was the King's indignation, that neither the apology, tears, nor the intercession of the nobles on her behalf, could appease his wrath, but being a

foreign princess her life was spared; yet the King not only for ever renounced her, but confined her for his life time to a strict imprisonment, commanding, if she died there, her body should not be buried, but there moulder to dust, nor would he forgive her at his own death, for she out lived him, and was set a liberty after his decease by her son Richard, who succeeded his father, and considering the hardship of imprisonment from experience, she by her own liberality, and the interest she had with her son, for the most part, set the prison gates open, as well to criminals as to debtors.

King Henry having wreak'd his vengeance on the murderers of his beloved Rosamond, caused her body to be taken out of that obscure grave, wherein the Queen had caused her to be laid, and buried her with all the funeral pomp imaginable, at Godstow, near to Oxford, erecting to her memory a stately tomb, on which was this inscription:

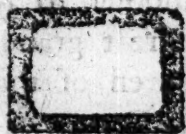
Hic jacet in tomba, Rosamundi, non Rosamunda
Non redolet, sedolet, quæ redolere solet.

In

Fair ROSAMOND. 77

In English thus:

*Within this tomb, lies the world's chiefest rose:
She who was sweet, will now offend your nose.*



This was the end of fair Rosamond, who, had she not been led astray by King Henry, with the glittering tinsel of royalty, might have made a wife worthy to the greatest Peer in England. Or if King Henry, had been then a single man, might as well have adorned the English crown, as Elizabeth the widow of Sir John Grey, who being courted as a mistress by King Edward the Fourth, plainly told him, that as she did not think herself good enough to be his wife, so that she thought herself much too good to be a whore, either to him, or to the greatest Prince in Christendom: and this opposition of her's to his lascivious courtship inflam'd the King the more; as having seldom been refused by the ladies of that age, whom he solicited on the same account, so that his passion grew so high at last,

that

that what he could not obtain unlawfully from her, he resolved to gain by the more lawful and honourable way of marriage; and accordingly he made her his Queen, and afterwards grandmother to King Henry the Eighth, and was great grandmother to the famous maiden queen of that name. But the case was otherwise with King Henry the Second, who was a married man when he courted Rosamond, and therefore had she refused his unlawful embraces, and been married to an English Nobleman, as she might have been, she had never been recorded to posterity, as one of the unfortunate Concubines of the Kings of England.



A SONG

Fair ROSAMOND. 79

A
S O N G
ON THE
Death of Fair ROSAMOND.



IN Woodstock Bower, once grew a flower,
Belov'd of England's King,
The like for scent and sweet content,
Did never in England spring;

Her

Her cheeks were of the rosy red;
 As fair as fair might be,
 Her seemly front, and ivory brow,
 Like crystal was to see.
 Fair Rosamond of Rose-like hue,
 Enticed so to love,
 As caused Henry's royal heart
 The joys thereof to prove;
 Lord Clifford's daughter, fair and young,
 Was now the only she,
 That lov'd, and was belov'd again
 By his high Majesty.
 At Woodstock, in a labyrinth
 Of many turnings round,
 Where only by a clew of thread
 The Lady must be found,
 And by no way but with the same
 The which the King well knew,
 Which now and then for his delight,
 Him to her presence drew.
 Besides her maidens, a false Knight
 Attended on her there,
 With whom he likewise fell in love,
 But durst not speak for fear,
 At length, but with great modesty,
 He courted her for grace,
 But all in vain, it bootéd not,
 He lack'd both time and place.
 Henry, quoth she, began with me
 To make my thoughts unchaste,
 And none but he, and only he;
 My body hath embrac'd;
 Then I will be as true and just;
 In this my wanton sin,

The

As ever Prince's paramour,
 Persist no more therein.
 The Knight dismiss her presence thus,
 Grew daily in great fear,
 That Henry at his back return,
 Should of his purpose hear;
 Therefore unto the Queen he hies,
 And told her of the same,
 How she had but the title given,
 And Rosamond the gain.
 Came I from France, Quee Dowager,
 Quoth she, to pay so dear,
 For bringing him so great a wealth,
 To be misused here?
 Am I so old, or he so young
 To be a wanton grown,
 That for to have another's bed,
 He will refuse his own?
 Like Progne, seeking Philomel,
 She presently forth found
 The bower that lodg'd her husband's love,
 Built bravely under-ground.
 And enter'd into Rosamond,
 Whom when the Queen did view,
 So bravely clad in rich attire,
 To height her malice grew.
 Now marvel, quoth the Queen, if oft
 The Court did miss the King,
 When such a load stone as thou art,
 Him to this Bower did bring.
 Now trust me, were she not a whore,
 Or any whore but his,
 I would her pardon, but, in soot,
 I may not pardon this.

Fair Rosamond surpris'd thus,
 E're ought she did suspect;
 Fell on her humble knees, and did
 Her hands to Heaven erect:
 She blush'd out beauty, whilst with tears
 Did wash her lovely face
 And begged pardon for her sin,
 In hopes to find some grace.
 So far forth as it lay in me,
 I did, quoth she, withstand;
 But what may not so great a King
 By means or force command?
 And dar'st thou Minion, said the Queen
 Thus circumstance with me?
 Nay, thou wer'st best to come to court;
 The King will welcome thee.
 With that she dash'd her on the lips;
 So died with double red;
 Hard was the heart that gave the stroke;
 Soft were the lips that bled;
 Then forc'd she her to swallow down,
 Prepar'd for that intent,
 A poison'd drink with quick dispatch,
 And so away they went.

The End of the History of Fair Rosamond.





THE
HISTORY
OF

JANE SHORE.

CHAP. I.

*Of the Parentage and Birth of Jane Shore
how her early, but charming Beauty
caused many to fall in Love with her.*

MRS. Jane Shore, the wife of Mr.
Matthew Shore, (who was some-
time a goldsmith, in Lombard-street.)
concubine to Edward IV. King of Eng-
land,

land, is so well known in history, that he must be a stranger to our English chronicles, who has not heard of her. And yet, tho she be mentioned in all, there are but few histories, tho' never so bulky and voluminous, that have given a succinct and particular account of her life and actions, which may make this history the more acceptable to those that are curious to enquire into it.

This lovely tho' unhappy woman, at the shrine of whose beauty so mighty and warlike a Monarch offered up his devotions, was the daughter of Mr. Thomas Wainstead, a wealthy and eminent citizen of London, and one of the worshipful company of Mercers, who lived in Cheapside, not far from the Chapel belonging to that company, where also Mrs. Jane was born, who was brought up with all that tenderness which an only child commonly meets with from a loving and indulgent father: Nor did she want for any education which that age afforded, and her father was able to give, or she capable of receiving, needle-work of all sorts, with

with music and dancing, were accomplishments she might boast with any citizen's daughter in London. And being naturally witty, and of an airy and facetious temper, sets all her parts off to the best advantage; and her father indulging her natural vanity with the richest and most resplendent jewels, she appeared like another Venus, or rather out did her, being admired by all as a consummate beauty: for tho' her attire was very rich and costly, yet her own native beauty was enough to set her off: And therefore,

*The wealth she wore about her seem'd to hide,
Not to adorn her native beauty's pride;
Bright pearls and jaspers of a various dye,
And diamonds darken'd by her brighter eye;
The sapphires blue, by her more azure veins,
Hung not to boast, but to confess their stains;
The blazing rubies seem'd to lose their dye,
When her more ruby lips were moving by;
It seem'd so well become her all she wore,
She had not robb'd at all the creature's store,
But had been nature's self, there to have shew'd
What she on creatures could or had bestow'd;
Nay, Jove himself wou'd reveal in her brow,
Were he to spend another golden shower:*

*In short, her eyes shot such surprizing rays,
She was esteem'd the wonder of her days.*

No wonder than her father doated on her; and his trade lying among the Court-ladies, he often carried his daughter with him, to shew her the pastimes that were frequently made there to divert the Queen, &c. which gave her an early longing after a higher sphere of honour than she had yet attained to, or her city breeding was likely to produce.

When she grew to the age of fifteen, her extraordinary stock of beauty, and charming mien, caused many to fall in love with her; and some great Lords fix'd their eyes on her, to get her for a mistress; which her father perceiving, sent her privately to be with his sister at Northampton, where she remained about a year till he supposed their enquiry after her was over, and that she might safely return without any hazard of being further tempted to lewdness. Yet she was no sooner at home, but a
plot

plot was laid one night to have her carried away in a chariot by the Lord Hattings, (who after the death of King Edward, took her for his concubine, as will appear in the close of this history.) But the maid he had bribed with gold to get her abroad, repenting such treachery to her master in being instrumental to the debauching his fair daughter; gave timely notice, by which means it was prevented; and her father plainly perceiving, unless he speedily took some prudent course, her beauty would be her ruin. So true is what Dryden tells us,

*Beauty is seldom fortunate, when great;
A vast estate, but overcharg'd with debt;
Beauty like ice our footing does betray,
Who can tread sure on the smooth slippery way;
Pleas'd with the passage, we slide swiftly on,
And see the dangers which we cannot shun.
Unpunish'd, thou to few were ever given,
Nor a blessing, but a mark from Heaven.*

And therefore he resolved to marry her, that so having surrendered her virginity, and being in the arms of a husband, those that before sought to crop

her virgin rose would not regard her, but give over the pursuit.

And amongst those that courted, and earnestly sought her in way of marriage, was one Mr. Matthew Shore, a goldsmith of eminent note in Lombard-street, whom her father pitch'd on for a fit husband and acquainted his fair daughter with his intentions to marry her to him; but she always shewed a very great aversion to it, alledging sometimes, the disproportion of years, he being about thirty, and she but a little above sixteen; and other times his being much disfigured with the small pox, and many other exceptions she made. However her father's positive command, and the rich presents her love made her, won her consent so far, that she yielded to the match; and so married they were in great pomp, many of the Court and City being invited to the wedding, which was kept with great feasting many days. Nor were the wits of the age wanting to present them with epithalamiums, which
were

were too numerous to insert; let it suffice therefore to give you one.

*Call to the bridegroom to the bride,
Deck'd in all her beauty's pride:
May all the pleasures, all the sweets,
That attend the genial sheets:
Hymen's chains and loving bands,
Be now resign'd into your hands.
May soft joys, now you're wed,
Be the curtains for your bed.
May fair honour and delight
Crown your day, and bless your night.
May you oft repeated kisses
Turn to both your happy blisses.
And the warm embrace of love,
Be as warm as Venus' dove.*

*Methought I saw them kindle to desire,
While with soft sighs they blew the fire:
Saw the approaches of their joy,
He grew more fierce, and she less coy.
Saw how they mingled melting ways,
Exchanging love a thousand ways:
Kind was the force on every side,
Her new desire she cou'd not hide,
Nor wou'd the bridegroom be deny'd,
Till she transferr'd in his arms,
Yield to the conqueror all her charms:
His panting breast to her's now join'd,
They feast on raptures unconfin'd,
And mingle souls to that degree,
They melt into an extacy.*

*And like the Phoenix both expire,
While from the ashes of the fire,
Spring up a new and soft desire.
Like charmers, thrice they did invoke
Love's Powers, and thrice new vigour took.*

C H A P. II.

How the Lord Hastings made suit to her to be his Mistress, with the Repulse she gave him; and how he praised her so much to King Edward, that the King went disguised to see her.



THE new bridegroom having enjoyed his charming bride, grew extremely fond of her, even to doating; which

which as it usually happens with married women, sickned and paul'd her Love towards him; and seem'd to say like Othello,

*I hate fruition, now 'tis past;
'Tis all but nastiness at best:
The homeliest thing that we can do;
Besides 'tis short and fleeting too:
A squirt of slippery delight,
That in a moment takes its flight:
A fulsome blis, that soon does cloy,
And makes us loath what we enjoy.*

Which he perceiving, and to wind himself, as he thought, the more into her affections, he cloathed her very richly, and adorned her with jewels, denying her nothing that she desired, or he concluded could tend to her delight and satisfaction; so that she always appeared abroad, and in her shop like a terrestrial angel, which glorious sight brought custom to her husband's shop, and allured many to come to lay out their money, who otherwise would not have done it. Nor was it long ere the
Lord

Lord Hastings had the unwelcome news brought to him, that his fair Jane was married; which however made him not give over his purpose of enjoying her; so that often he resorted to see her, treating her at home, and her husband abroad, often inviting them both to the Court; and took his opportunity to pour out his amorous discourse to the wife, laboursing by many fair words and devices to seduce her to transgress her nuptial vows in defiling her Marriage-bed, but in vain, for being very witty, and of a jovial and merry temper she so baffled him with her quick and sharp replies, that he could not tell which way to take her, for when he often supposed she was the nearest yielding to comply with his desires, he found her the furthest from it; insomuch that when one time intending to try his utmost effort, he had thrown her on a bed in the room, when they were privately together in her house, she got from him, and run to her husband, telling him plainly how rude the Lord Hastings had been; which angering the
good

good man, he modestly rebuked him; forbidding him his house, and his wife's conversation; which made him fling away in a great heat, resolving in revenge to raise up such a rival to Shore, that neither his authority, nor his wife's charity should be able to withstand.

This Lord Hastings being chamberlain to King Edward the fourth, and a great favourite, having frequently his ear, and finding he was much inclin'd to fair women, tho' he was married to the Lady Elizabeth Grey, took an opportunity to sound in her ears the fame of Jane Shore's incomparable beauty, extolling the Quickness of her wit, and the facetiousness of her humour, much above that of her excellent features; which made the King, who was extremely wanton and amorous (his wars being now entirely ended with the house of Lancaster, and he securely settled on his throne without a rival) to give great attention to Hastings's discourse of this beautiful shop keeper; resolving, by putting himself into a disguise to have a view of this surprizing beauty himself

himself that his own eyes might be a witness of the truth of what Hastings had related to him.

The King, whose thought still run on his new-intended mistress ; (and was in love already with the Idea he had fram'd of her in his own imagination) delay'd not long to pay her a visit ; and in order to it, attired himself like a merchant, and then withdrew privately from the court, only attended with a page : and coming into Shore's shop, then the richest in Lombard-street, he found Mr. Shore, her Husband, attending the business of his shop, and very busy in his own affairs ; and so for a little while tarrying till he was at leisure, he desir'd to see some plate, which was presently shewed him, and under pretence of carrying it with him beyond the seas, soon agreed for a considerable Quantity. But the main commodity our disguis'd merchant wanted, still behind, for the charming wife kept all this while incognito, it being not her hour to come down into the shop : which made him very uneasy, delaying the

time with taking of several matters transacted in England, and beyond the seas, where he said he had travelled; for, being a Prince of great learning, and of a ready wit, he never wanted a theme to enlarge upon, but could discourse of most countries, and the trade or commerce held with them; which much delighted Shore, so that he ordered his man to fetch up a bottle of his best wine, and had him to his withdrawing-room, where they drank merrily; the good man beginning a health to the King, in which the King you may be sure pledg'd him heartily; and when some other healths had passed, *Well,* said the supposed merchant, *I see you have a good shop well stor'd with rich commodities, and your house well furnished, at least by what I have seen, but methinks the chiefest thing of all is wanting still; and which in my judgment is so material, that I wonder such a man as you can be without it. Pray what's that, Sir,* said Mr. Shore? *A good Wife,* reply'd the Royal Merchant, *to be the mistress of so fair a mansion: for I dare say*

say that you deserve, and I believe that I can help you to one that is both young and beautiful, rich, and of a very agreeable and facetious temper; which in a married state are qualifications very desirable, and that greatly contribute to the happiness of a man's life. I am of your opinion, Sir, answered Mr. Shore; and therefore think myself not a little happy, that am blessed with a wife every way so accomplished. However, Sir, I am nevertheless obliged to you for your kind offer. But, tho' I say it, continued he, I have a wife that's hardly to be paralleled, in whom all beauties and graces meet, and yet she is as virtuous as fair. I grant, replied the love-sick merchant, you are very happy in having such a Jewel. But, Sir, continued he, may not I see this wonder of the world (for such she doubtless is, that is so divinely accomplished) that I may make her a small present, to shew the homage that I pay to virtue. Yes, Sir, replied the Goldsmith, she shall be at your service presently. And thereupon ordered one of his servants to tell her that he'd speak with her immediately,

ly; and thereupon she came into the back room to him, attired in a sky-coloured morning gown, flowered with gold, and embroidered with pearls and spangles, her head attire being curious lace, under which her bright hair flow'd, wantoning with the sporting air, and her blushes upon her approach made her yet more lovely to behold.

The King no sooner saw the object of his heart's desire, but he stept forth and saluted her soft coral lips, impressing on them many balmy kisses; and so by her husband's desire she sat down, and the King drank to her, she pledg'd him and passed it to her husband. And much pleasant discourse passed, by which the King perceived her not only of a merry free temper, but also exceeding witty, which delighted him as much as her beauty, and made him resolve at any rate he would enjoy her; and so presenting her with some curious things which she modestly refused, thinking them presents too great for a stranger, till her husband desired her not to slight her husband's civility:

the King pulling out his gold and paying for his plate, which Shore would have sent home, but he refused it; ordering his page to carry it; and with man sweet kisses, and some amorous whispers, he took leave at that time of the charming fair one.

*Well of his gold might he be lavish bere,
For beauty never could be bought too dear :
For plate he paid his gold, but fix'd his eyes
Upon a treasure he far more did prize.
And yet whate'er he sent away we find
He left his chiefest jewel still behind.
Yet he the best way took, when all is done,
For 'tis by gold the greatest beauty's won :
And tho' as yet, he had no conquest made,
She to his arms soon after was betray'd.*

JANE SHORE. 99
CHAP. III.

How she warned her Husband of the Danger. How Mrs. Blague solicited the King's Love to her, carrying her to Court, where, upon dancing with the King in a Mask, he put a Letter into her Hand, and discovered who he was that had courted her in disguise.



THE King was no sooner departed, but the beauteous Mrs. Shore asked her husband if he was acquainted with this gentleman, that had been so liberal to her, and desired to know who he was? Her husband answered, That he never saw him before, but that

he told him he was a merchant, but he knew him not. Ah, said his wife, and shook her head. (who having a more discerning eye than her husband, saw something in his eyes and mien that was not common). "My dear, his airy countenance, and graceful carriage shews him to be something more: I rather take him for some great Lord in disguise, that will prove troublesome to me upon the account of requiring my love, as some before have done: therefore sweet husband, let me beg of you as you tender my chastity, and your own quiet, if he comes again, as I believe he will, and ask for me, that you do not let him know that I am at home, but rather tell him, that I am sick, and gone into the country, or any thing you think most probable to put him off, that he may come no more.

The good man was high pleased with his wife's virtue and prudence in this matter, and promised to do what she required. She was also giving him some further cautions to be used to
such

such kind of customers, but people coming in about business, retired.

The King being gone back to the Court, where he had been missed, and much enquired for, soon changed his apparel, and came amongst his nobles, with a very chearful countenance, and though others were ignorant, Hastings well perceived where he had been, and the satisfaction he had received, and no sooner were they in private, but the King said, Well, Hastings, I perceive thou hast some judgment in fine women. I have seen Shore's wife, and she exceeds the praises that you gave her, though then I thought them very lavish. I like her so well, that come what will, I must enjoy her, though I have made but a little progress in my love. But the great thing that lies before me now, is to have your advice how I shall bring my purpose to an issue. To court her in her husband's presence, as a private person, I shall be served as you were, and then to do it as a King, will look too low for me, to force her from his

arms I will not, for it would cause a murmuring among my subjects, who would fear the like by their wives and daughters: but I must have her, and with her own consent, for love constrained carries no pleasures nor charms in it, therefore how this last may be attained, do you devise.

The Lord Hastings no sooner heard what the King determined last, but smiling said, Take no great care for this shall be easy to your Highness: there is one Mrs. Blague, your lace-woman, has a house near to Shore's, and is very intimate with his fair wife, and thither she often resorts to pass the evenings away. This person is a woman of infinite intreague, and of so damn'd and covetous a temper, that a purse of gold would win her to do any thing, nay, even to debauch her own daughter. I dare promise she will quickly find out ways and means to bring her to your lute. I will engage her if your Highness so pleases, in this matter, for no spring is so sure a taker in love-affairs

affairs, as to set one woman to wheedle and betray another. The King liked this device, and it was agreed, that he should see her at Mrs. Blague's house, and there court her, but she should not know he was the King till he was pleas'd it should be discovered.

The Lord Hastings was not slow in promoting his master's happiness, who had so highly favoured him, but soon with gifts and large promises made the covetous lace woman pliable, to do in this affair whatever was desired, so that a great many meetings were had at her house, and splendid treats made, the King still coming as her friend in disguise, but although she left the lovely Jane sometimes on purpose alone with him, and retired, and he courted her with all his rhetorick, yet she appeared averse to yield to his love, often blaming him sharply for proposing such an immodest thing to her, as to defile her marriage-bed, and when he took his leave, she very much chid Mrs. Blague for suffering so rude and so debauched a gentleman to come into her house,

house, telling her the design he had upon her chastity, who seemed to wonder at it, as altogether ignorant, protesting she had not thought it in him, but intreated her to be at ease and make no words of it, for she would suffer him to come there no more. This pacified her, but the plot being further laid for her ruin, in Christmas time she got leave of Mr. Shore that his Wife should accompany her to the court, to see the balls and masks there which he consented to, with some unwillingness: and being introduced, after many had danced to the melodious music, one man of a comely port entered, shining in gold and jewels, with a mask on, upon which Mrs. Shore heard the ladies whisper, That's the King, who looking round through his mask, fixed his eyes on her, and immediately stepped to her seat, and took her out to dance with him, at which she blushed and trembled, but being in a strange place, not to be unmannerly, she complied, and performed her part to admiration, which ended, taking her to a
side

side-light, pulling off his mask to salute her, she to her great amazement, perceived it was the same man who had entertained her at her shop, and at Mrs. Blague's house, when putting a letter into her hand, he retired. And she in much confusion, coming to Mrs. Blague, intreated her she would go home, who having effected what she came for, willingly consented, and as she returned, plainly told her, that man was the King, and deeply in love with her, when reading the letter, they found no more in it than this,

Fairest of Women!

THE same of your charming beauty made me put on the disguise of a Merchant, to get a sight of you; and the sight of you has put my heart into such a flame, that nothing but enjoying you will ever be able to quench it. It is your King that is your supplicant, and begs you would be kind to him: he that can command is willing to intreat, and therefore, surely you will not prove inexorable. And if you will take pity on your King, send one kind Letter

to him, which he'll receive with greater Joy then if another crown was offered him. For he esteems your beauty and good humour far above all the shining ladies of the Court. And further does assure you that whatsoever you shall lose for his sake shall be made up to you with advantage, by

Edward, Rex.

When she had read this letter she was much disturbed, and could not forbear saying, Ah! Mrs. Blague, I could not have believed, that you would have brought me into such a premunire as now you see I am in. To which Mrs. Blague very pertly answered, I see no premunire at all, it is an honour to be beloved by a King? And does he not promise you, That whatever you shall lose for his sake, shall be made up to you with advantage? And then where can be the damage? You talk very strangely, replied Mrs. Shore. Does he not design the robbing me of my Chastity? And can any thing be a compensation

for the loss of one's virtue? When that's once gone, it cannot be made good again: for that's a jewel which when once sullied, can never be restored to its first native brightness. Marry, says Mrs. Blague, I think you make a great deal to do more than needs, if he would accept of me in your room, I should be very glad to take your place. They say the crown takes away all stains, and I don't know why the love of a King should not take away all reproach from the person beloved. And therefore pray be advised to write a kind letter to the King; come, he'll take it well. I'll advise with my pillow, said she, and so went home.

The HISTORY of
C H A P, IV.

How, by the persuasion of Mrs. Blague, she writ a Letter to the King, and afterwards complied with the King's Desire, and suffered him to enjoy her privately, going from her Husband under Pretence of seeing her Mother, &c.



ALL the night following Mrs. Shore grew restless and uneasy; her husband enquired the cause, but could not learn it, though he found in the morning some tears had bedewed her fair cheeks; as soon as she was up, she went to Mrs. Blague, to consult what

what she must do in this streight, as well knowing the King's humour, that he never spared any woman in his lust, nor man in his anger; and therefore if she complied not, he would compel her to his bed; and then perhaps, for her fullness in not freely yielding, he having satisfied his appetite, might punish her, and make her a publick shame, to the ruin of herself and relations.

Mrs. Blague seeing her thus pensive and doubtful, with a betraying smile, said, Come, come, my dear Jane, you must be no longer coy, nor deny the King his request, a royal mistress stands so high, that no figure dares point at her, or tongue revile her. You will glitter so near a throne, and enjoy so gallant a bedfellow, that my child you will never have cause to repent of leaving a dull husband for so advantageous a change. I find he is resolved to have you for a mistress, and therefore its best for you to submit to be so highly honoured, which will be very pleasing to

L

him.

him. And therefore pray write him a kind letter presently. Which, at Mrs. Blague's persuation, she did in these words:

Royal Sir,

I Was much surprized at the contents of your letter, and am altogether ignorant of my putting your heart into such a flame as you speak of. But if it should be so, it was a sin of ignorance, and I am willing to do any Penance for committing it; tho' I believe you may have a more suitable remedy nearer hand, some of those shining ladies that you mention in your letter being far more capable of quenching that flame, than, may it please your highness,

Your most dutiful

Subject and servant,

JANE SHORE.

Mrs. Blague said this letter was not kind enough, but Mrs. Shore would not alter it. Mrs. Blague then went with it to the King, and gave him an account of

JANE SHORE. III

of her proceedings with Mrs. Shore, and what she had brought her to. And then told the King, That if he would please to send his chariot the next night, she would bring him to his arms. The King commended and rewarded her, and promised his chariot should be ready for her. Mrs. Blague came back, and tells Mrs. Shore, the King would take no denial, but would send his chariot for her to-morrow night.

At this discourse Mrs. Shore trembled, yet considering from the many attempts her beauty had caused, it was not made to be enjoyed by one; and having an ambitious mind in a fatal hour, the counsel of Mrs. Blague prevailed, and it was agreed that very night she should take her best apparel and jewels, and put herself into the King's kind arms, without any more formality, or ceremonious denials.

This being concluded, Mrs. Blague immediately sent the King notice of her success, who was not slow at the appointed time to send his chariot for them. And in the mean while her

cloaths were conveyed to Mrs. Blaguel's. However, she supped with her husband kindly kissed him, and dropt some tears, when on a sudden, one came of a feigned errand to tell her, her mother was taken ill, and must needs speak with her: he would have gone with her, but she put it off, and so giving him the last kiss he ever received from her fair lips, with tears in her eyes she left him, and coming where the chariot stood ready having put on her glorious apparel, she and Mrs. Blague got into it, and were conveyed to the King's secret apartment, where they found him in his closet: he raised his mistress, who upon her approach kneeled, kindly kissed her, and welcomed her with many varieties, but it being late, and Mrs. Blague having delivered up this treasure of beauty into her monarch's arms, left them in the temple of Venus to enjoy those mutual blisses they had been so long pursuing.

But, O the raptures of that night?

What fierce convulsions of delight?

How

*How in each others arms involv'd,
 They lay confounded and dissolv'd;
 Bodies mingled, sexes blending,
 Which should most be lost contending
 Darting fierce, and flaming kisses,
 Plunging into boundless blisses.*

*Shore, at the first was coy and hard to win,
 With artful courting play'd the modest part;
 But soon as once she had engag'd i'th' sir,
 O how she hugg'd the charming tingling dart;
 And then cry'd nearer, nearer to my heart,
 For you are sov'reign now of all within.*

But let me not envy her, nor her
 present joys, but prosecute her story,
 and we shall quickly see at what a dear
 rate she purchased them.

C H A P. V.

Mr. Shore's Uneasiness at his Wife's tar-
rying out. He and her Father's fruitless
Researches after her, and giving her over
for lost, they mourn and lament.



WHAT pleasure soever Mrs. Shore
took in the King's unlawful
embraces, yet her husband sat at home
full of sorrow, wondering what ex-
traordinary accident had detained her
beyond her usual hour, or what ad-
venture she had met withal. At
last he went to her mother's, to see
what

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what the matter was she staid so long, but was extreemly surpriz'd to find she had not been there all the day; nor was her mother ill, nor had she sent for her, as Mrs. Shore pretended, this put him to so great a nonplus, that he knew not what to think, nor cou'd he in the least imagine what should become of her. A thousand strange imaginations crouded into his head, and thrust out one another: sometimes he thought that mischief had befallen her; and then began with bitter lamentations to lament her dismal and unhappy fate, but then, because she made such a false story as an excuse to go abroad, he thought there must be something in it of design, which was not good: and then his head began to ach, and he imagin'd that he felt some buddings out of horns already in his forehead: but then remembring her modest and her chaste deportment, he check'd himself for letting such a thought harbour one moment in his troubled breast. No, no, said he, dear Jane, I know not how to think one thought of thee that is not good;

good, Virtue herself may sooner go astray, than I can think you in a thought can't err. Forgive me, therefore that I but suspect thee, it is a fault I know not how to expiate. Were I but half so sure that thou art well, as that thou'rt good, religious, chaste and virtuous, I should then be the happiest man alive. Wheresoe'er thou art, I ne'er shall rest until I have thee circled in my arms. I am afraid, that to avoid temptations, thou hast withdrawn thyself into a nunnery, there to give up thyself to thy devotions, because the world w'nt worthy of thy company; yes, yes, cry'd he, just like a man distracted, I know it must be so, thou cou'dst not else be absent from thy husband and for a moment. Be thou were thou wilt, I'll find thee out, and when I have found thee we will never part again.

Thus the poor man pass'd the sad night away, whilst her relations were as much concern'd as he. Her father and her mother were afraid some violence might have been offered to her matchless beauty, having often attracted the eyes and hearts of those that gaz'd upon her. There was not one
they

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they knew she was acquainted with, but they went thither, hoping they might find her; and Mrs. Blague among the rest was visited, to know if she could tell what was become of her. But the dissembling hag protested solemnly she had not seen her for two days before, and shed some tears, to make her friends believe how much she was concern'd that she was missing.

But after all their search had been in vain, that they could hear no tidings of their daughter, they seemed to be even swallow'd up with grief, especially when they beheld their son-in-law inconsolable; *Alas*, said they, *what sorrow's like to this, to have our only child thus strangely lost, we know not how nor where? death would have been far much more eligible; we should have then known what became of her; but now we're left to wild uncertain guesses: Ah! dearest child! who knows what thou may'st suffer, because thou'lt not comply to satisfy the lust of barbarous ravishers.*

O that we ne'er had lived to see this day,
Or that thou ne'er hadst thus been snatch'd away.

Thus.

Thus did her wretched Parents echo each others griefs in lamentations, because they knew not what could become of her.

CHAP. VI.

How, her husband and her parents came to know that Jane Shore was with the King in the Quality of his Concubine; and how, for very grief and shame, her husband sold off all he had, and went beyond sea; with an Account of his Return into England many years afterwards, and his Tragical End.



IT was now almost a week, that Mrs. Shore had been concealed at court, (and

and was in the mean time given over for lost by her husband and parents when the news of her being the King's concubine, had taken air, and made a great noise in the city; and too soon arriv'd to her poor husband's and her relations ears; for they had both much rather never heard of her at all, and that she had been lost for ever, than to have found her there. Had she been took away by any else, there had been hopes of getting her again. but now she was in such a place, that 'twas above their reach to take her thence. They knew the King was violent in all his passions, especially his love and his ambition, and more especially the first, of which there could not be a greater instance, than in his marriage of the Queen, for tho' he had sent Nevil, the great Earl of Warwick (that made and unmade Kings at his own pleasure) into France, there to propose a Match betwixt him and the Lady Bona, the French King's daughter, which was agreed to, and concluded almost as soon as it was proposed; yet having in the mean time

seen

leen and Sir John the widow of Sir John Gray, (who was slain in the battle of St. Alban's, as he was fighting for King Edward's Rival, Henry the sixth) and not being able to obtain enjoyment on any other terms than that of marriage; he took her for his Queen, and marry'd her; and rather chose to disoblige his best and greatest friends, and run the Hazard of the crown itself, then to deny himself the satisfaction of having her whom he had such a fancy for; and therefore they consider'd how dangerous a thing 'twould be for them to shew the least resentment, tho' for so great an injury, as that of ravishing a wife and daughter from them. And that which was more grievous to them yet, they found that she herself was pleas'd with what she'd done; in making such a voluntary elopement from her husband. And seeing she had thus lost all her virtue, what was there in her now worth the regarding? The thoughts of this so troubled her poor afflicted husband, who so much doated on her virtue, that shame and grief

grief confounded him, he scarce knew what he either said or did, nor would he see, nor yet be seen by any, if he at all could help it. He thought that each man that saw him pointed at him, nor could one lift a finger up before him, but he strait thought that they made horns at him. All day he would shut himself up in his chamber, and sigh away his melancholly hours, and curse the time he e're saw Wainstead's daughter. But when at last he found a means to send to his false wife, and saw she slighted him, and would not once vouchsafe to come and see him, nor suffer him to come and see her there, he even resolved to go abroad and travel, and if he could forget he ever had seen her, And therefore selling off his goods and household stuff, and turning all his plate into broad gold (for then there was no guineas) he left this hated land of his nativity, and took a tour to Flanders, France and Spain, thence to Morocco, and from thence to Turkey; finding, as he imagined far more kindness amongst the Turks and Infidels, then he had

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found

found in England; and it was not without reason that he thought so, as the sequel made it good. For after a long tract of time, and travelling from one place to another, had cured him of his melancholly, and eased him of his money, he turned back again to London. King Henry the Seventh having then swayed the sceptre many years, and his wife having miserably perished long before, and the remembrance of her almost forgotten; so that he now became as great a stranger here, as he had been before in foreign parts. Here therefore he resolved again to settle, and privately to work at his own calling, but having been used to live high, and his pockets being now grown low, his work would not recruit him fast enough; he therefore thought upon a speedier way, which was to file and chip off gold from those broad pieces, which went then in current payment: but he made more haste than good speed, for being taken in the fact, he was committed to prison, and afterwards tried and executed for the same at Tyburn,
here

where he concluded his tragical end.
 And though this unfortunate man just-
 ly suffered the law, in the reign of King
 Henry the Seventh, yet it may without
 any injustice be said, That he was mur-
 dered by King Edward the Fourth, who
 by enticing away his wife, brought in-
 evitable ruin and destruction on him and
 his family. And thus we find there is
 a tide in the affairs of men, which when
 at the flood lead on to Fortune, but if
 that be neglected, all the long voyage
 of their following life, they're bound in
 shallows and in miseries.

*Since ev'ry man who lives is born to die,
 And none can boast sincere felicity,
 With equal mind let us what happens bear,
 Nor joy, nor grieve too much for things beyond our
 care.*

*Like Pilgrims to the appointed place we tend,
 The world's an inn, and death's the journey's end.*

C H A P. VII.

How Jane Shore lived in great splendor at Court, during the Reign of Edward the Fourth.



THERE is nothing so bewitching, and so apt to draw away our hearts and affections from the considerations of eternity, and the things of another life, as the pomp and vanities of this present world. The splendor of King Edward's court, and the great figure she made there, by means of the extraordinary countenance [and favour which

which King Edward shewed her, with the crouds of petitioners and flatterers wherewith she was always attended, made her forget her disconsolate husband, and the sighs and tears of her parents, who would have rather seen her virtuous than great. It is true, she never abused the power she had with the King to the prejudice of any, and was always a friend to the poor, and to those that were in affliction and distress, and was so ready to do good, that when his courtiers durst not interceed for such as lay under the King's displeasure, she with her ready wit and merry humour, would so abate his anger, that she oft-times has saved the lives both of the rich and poor, and would always be a shelter to those who were oppressed by the exorbitant power of them that were great: she was easy of access to the poor, and so far from a mercenary spirit, that she never sold her favour, but would freely do any kindness that lay in her power for any person; righting many that were wronged, but never wronging or oppressing

pressing any ; which made her generally beloved by the common people. And often when the King had been offended with his officers and servants, she by her witty and facetious carriage with the King, would oft drive the storm, which otherwise would have powered down upon them. So that her enemies would say, 'Twas a pity that she was a whore, and that she was indeed ; that was the stain that clouded all her glory, and blemished all the goodness which she had, or good she did, and sapped the foundation of her happiness. And yet methinks I cannot but grieve to think her life should at the last be closed by such a sad catastrophe : for when she went on progress with the King, she frequently would send for all the poor, and still proportion her relief to their necessities ; nor would she only by herself relieve them, but if she knew of any that with the King, expected some good offices from her on that account, altho' she herself was never mercenary, yet she would put them upon being charitable to the poor, and if they did expect kindness

kindness from her, they should be good to them. And this indeed was very generous in her.

But notwithstanding all her charity and goodness, she was not without enemies at Court; for there were ladies there that envied her favour with the King, and were not willing it should be engrossed so much by her, that they could have no share in it; and therefore oftentimes would rally her, but still were baffled in their vain attempts; for she had always such a pregnant wit, and was so ready at her repartees, that they could never get the better of her, but still were baffled in their vain attempts; And tho' King Edward had another mistress before her, which he still kept, namely the Lady Beesley, yet Shore had always the ascendant of her, Beesley pretended hugely to religion (which sits but very awkward on a whore) but Shore was always mighty brisk and merry, which made King Edward often joking say, 'I have two mistresses of very different tempers; one is the most religious, and the other the most merry of any one in England; and I must

must needs say, Shore was in the right of it; for Beesley would have done much better, either to have left her whoring off, or laid by her religion; because them too seldom agree together. And I believe King Edward thought so too, and therefore Shore had still the chiefest place in his affection, which always made her have such crowds of visitors, both at her chamber door, when in the court, and at her chariot-side when she rid abroad; whose suits she still preferred according to the utmost of her power, respecting the justice of their cause. And here it will not be amiss to mention, or a reason you shall know anon, how kind she was to Mrs. Blague, for whom she had procured of the king a stately house and manor of 250l. a year. But how well she did deserve it, you may hear hereafter. In a word, we cannot do justice to Mrs. Jane Shore, without granting that she was of a free, generous, and grateful temper; and that she improved her interest with the King for the benefit of all that stood in need of it, and to the prejudice of none but those that sought to oppress and tyrannize over their neighbours, for before she espoused any

cause,

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cause, she examined the matter, and always took the justest side.

Thus lived Jane Shore for some years in the midst of earthly delights, and worldly grandeur. But, alas! there is nothing stable nor fix'd under the sun: King's, tho' they are earthly gods, must die like men; for they are made of the same mouldering clay with other mortals, of which King Edward was to Jane Shore too sad an instance, for he dying at Westminster, in the fortieth year of his age, and twenty third of his reign, was buried at Windsor in a Chapel of his own founding; leaving behind him two young princes, to wit, Edward the Fifth, King of England, though never crowned; and Richard Duke of York his brother, and five daughters.

King Edward being dead, the Lord Hastings sent and took Jane Shore (whom he courted before King Edward knew her) to his own bed, keeping her as his concubine. And Shore thought it, after the King's death, the greatest honour she could then aspire to; besides, she thought the Lord would

would be a shelter to her, for the anger of the Queen, and other ladies at the court, who bore no great affection to her in King Edward's days, because she engrossed so much of his favour. But the Lord Hastings was so far from being able to protect Jane Shore, that he could not long protect himself: for crook-back Richard, Duke of Gloucester, brother to the deceased King, having laid a wicked design to put the Crown upon his own head, and to destroy his own Nephews: endeavoured to bring in as many of the nobility to his party as he could, and the Lord Hastings being one that had a great influence at court, having been in high favour with King Edward the Fourth, and Lord Chamberlain to the young King, the Duke had a great mind to bring him over to his party: but fearing to disclose his mind openly to him, he made large promises, and gave great rewards to one Catesby, a favourite of the Lord Hastings, by secret and dark discourses to sound him, and if possible to bring him over to his side. This Catesby undertook to do: and finding (after he had done all that he could) that the Lord Hastings was no way inclinable

inclinable to favour Gloucester's design, he told him of it, and tho' he had been maintained by Lord Hastings, and his fortune raised to what it was by him, yet he proved so base and treacherous to him, that he encouraged Gloucester to remove Hastings out of the world, if ever he intended to compass his design. This being resolved upon by them two, he called a grand council of Lords at the Tower, to consider of suitable preparations for the coronation; and when they had set a considerable time, he came in and took his chair, jesting with some of them, and excusing his too long stay, requesting of Dr. Morton Bishop of Ely, some strawberries that grew in his Garden at Holborn, which he immediately sent for; and took it as a favour that the Protector was so kind to to him, and to put it into his power to oblige him in any thing, for there had been formerly no good understanding between them two. Then taking some excuse for a short absence, he desired them to proceed in the method proposed. And about an hour after, he came in again, and took his chair, but with a countenance full of anger and resentment,

sentment, frowning, biting his lip, and knitting his brows, and shewing all the signs of one in an extraordinary passion: which strangely amazed all the council, so that they kept a profound silence, which the Protector for so had the Duke of Gloucester lately been made, perceiving, demanded what punishment they deserved who had wickedly procured his destruction, he being uncle to, and protector of the King? This question amazed them more than before, but all knowing themselves innocent of such intention, Lord Hastings, who by reason of the antient friendship that had been between them, thought he might be the bolder, replied, My Lord, such as have so transgressed, deserve the severest punishment the law can inflict, to which the other Lords assented. Then, said the Protector, that forsakes, meaning the Queen, and Jane Shore have conspired by witchcraft to destroy me. And then drawing up his sleeve, he shew'd his arm, which had been wasted from his infancy, as they all knew well enough, as a testimony of what he had said, bidding them behold how their charms had begun already to take effect on him. Hereupon Lord Hastings

tings, who, has as been already said, had taken Jane Shore to his bed, thinking to excuse her, said, My Lord, if they have done so, they deserve punishment. thou traytor, replied the protector, ferrest thou me with ifs and ands: I tell thee they have done it: and that will I make good upon thy body: and so, striking his fist upon the table, the room was presently filled with armed men, one of which struck at the Lord Stanley, and as nimble as he was to sink under the tale, grievously wounded him on the head; and then the Protector himself arrested the Lord Hastings, bidding him to make haste to shrive himself; for by St. Paul, which was his usual oath, he would neither eat nor drink till his head was off, and so being led out into the green within the Tower; he was there beheaded on a log, without staying for the formality of a scaffold.

And here I cannot but take notice, how eminently the hand of divine justice was exemplified in the unjust execution of this Lord: who having so far joined with the Duke Gloucester,

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ter, as to be aiding in, and privy to the execution of the Queen's Father, the Lord Rivers, and the rest of her relations, who were by his contrivance beheaded at Pomfret, on that very day; on which by the contrivance of Gloucester, himself was beheaded in the Tower: so certain does sin and guilt dodge men to destruction.

JANE SHORE. 135
C H A P. VIII.

*How Jane Shore conveyed her Jewels to
Mrs. Blague's, who cheated her of them
all: And how she was persecuted by King
Richard the Third, who caused her to
do Penance in the open Street.*



THE sudden and tragical fate of
the Lord Hastings was a sufficient
Premonition or a Warning to Jane
[N 2] Shore,

Shore, of the storm that was now falling upon her own head ; and therefore she thought it but a prudent piece of conduct to make some timely provision for herself. The protector had already declared himself against her ; and Hastings , upon whom, after King Edward's death, her greatest hopes had been placed, had now lost his life, for but undertaking to vindicate her ; and therefore she packed up all her jewels, and her rich garments, and all the best of her things, and brought them to Mrs. Blague's, telling her, that she saw a storm coming, and therefore thought it was best to provide against it ; and that as she had served her in King Edward's Reign, she did not doubt but she would be as kind to her now, in securing her jewels, and other rich things, which therefore she had now brought with her, to put into her hands, as a place of security, that she might have them ready against a time of need.

Mrs. Blague seemed to commiserate her condition very much, telling her the

she was very sorry to see such a sad turn of the times ; and that little good could be expected from such a bloody monster as the protector ; but whatever she left in her hands, she might depend upon it, should be very safe ; and that herself and all she had, should be always welcome to her house ; for she should never forget the kindness she had shewed her, when she was in power, with several other large protestations of an intimate friendship and fidelity. This designing hypocrite, Mrs. Blague, who, was the first authoress and cause of this poor gentlewoman's ruin, by first persuading, and afterwards betraying her into the embraces of King Edward, having by her fair speeches got all her jewels, plate, and cloaths, into her hands, did in the time of her affliction and distress, which followed shortly after, treat her with the most barbarous usage that ever woman met with ; for coming to her, when all she had was seized on by King Richard's order, and desiring to have some of her jewels to make a little money on, she not only

denied that ever she received any of her, but called her filthy strumpet, whore, and cheat; asking if she came to put tricks upon her; with other base, approbrious speeches; and threatening that she'd have her whipt, if ever she came there again, thrusting her out of doors, without so much as giving her a piece of bread, altho' she begged it of her. And certainly to one of such a generous temper as Jane had been, nothing could make a greater or more deep impression, than such a barbarous treatment; I cannot therefore blame her, when she afterwtrds gave to King Richard's officers, upon her being examined where it was she had disposed her Jewels, and other things, a true account where they were all disposed; upon which they immediately repaired to Mrs: Blague's, demanding them of her but she served them as she had done Jane Shore, denied that she never had them, alledging, that they ever were brought to her, and therefore desired them to trouble her no further:

which

which answer, thought it was all that Jane Shore could get, yet the King's officers would not be satisfied so: But having power on their side, they entered in and searched the house, and breaking open all her trunks and drawers, and finding them by that means, they made it crime enough in her to have denied them; and therefore as an accomplice of Jane Shore, they cleared the house of all that she had, and seizing upon her estate besides, left her almost as miserable as they had made Jane Shore: And then her conscience brought to mind her black ingratitude, which made her sufferings appear just and right, and which she had so very well deserved.

*Ingratitudes the Growth of every Clime,
And of all Sins, the most accursed Crime:
For who can think that Human Nature can,
Breed such a Monster as th' ungrateful Man:
Who does against his Benefactor sin,
Least Men should think he has oblig'd been.
On him his Friend still loses all his Cost;
For ev'ry Favour shew'd to him is lost;
Nay, more than that, which is a greater Shame;
'Tis not only lost, but he forgets the same:*

Nay,

*Nay, does for Kindness, Spite and Mischief show,
Which is the greatest Height the Devil can go.
But I'll no more enlarge upon this Plague,
But wish all such be serv'd as Mrs. Blague.*

But to return from this digression, the Duke of Gloucester having pretended that Jane Shore was engaged in a plot against him, that he might the better hide the plot himself had laid against his two innocent nephews and the crown, sent his officers to the Lord Hastings's house to search for her; where she was but newly come back from carrying her best things to Mrs Blague's, as has been before related; and having seized her, and stript her of all she had, he caused her to appear before the Ecclesiastical Court, whereby a special order from his Highness, she was adjudged to do penance for her notorious adultries, committed with King Edward the Fourth, and afterwards with the Lord Hastings, with whom she had also plotted the destruction of his highness the Lord Protector of the King and kingdom, and this penance that she
was

was to perform, was done in this manner: She was stript of all her apparel, having only on her smock, and over that a white sheet, and in one hand a lighted taper of wax, and in the other a cross; in which posture she walked bare-legged and bare-foot, all through Cheap-side and Lombard-street, with a crowd of people to behold her; she looking so very lovely and charming, even in this penitent dress, that she was beloved by some, and pitied by others, and her hard fate lamented by all; except such as had engaged in Richard's accursed designs: This publick penance of hers at that time being enjoyed her, not so much as a punishment for her sins, as to amuse the minds of the people, that they might not busy themselves about those secret and treasonable designs that were carrying on at court, for the destruction of the youngest King and his brother, and the setting the crown upon that Monster's head, which soon after followed.

And

And therefore it was enough that Jane Shore was thus forced to do publick penance, but the tyrant immediately puts forth a severe proclamation against her, imploring, that whereas it was notoriously known, that Jane Shore had for several years, lived in open adultery with the late King Edward, to the high dishonour of Almighty God, and to the shame and reproach of honesty and virtue, and to the great grief of all good christians, and to the impoverishment of the King and realm, and the diminishing of the revenues of the crown, which she at her pleasure bestowed and lavished away, by enriching her own friends and relations, contrary to the laws of the land: it was therefore declared, that were ever any such money, plate, jewels or things were given away by her, it should be forthwith seized again to the King's use: and further, That as a just punishment for those notorious crimes, and also for engaging with the late Lord Hastings and others, by secrecy and witchcraft to take away the life of the right noble and illustrious Richard Duke of Gloucester, Protector of the King and kingdom, that they might the better compass their ends

ends upon the young King and his royal brother, it was thereby strictly prohibited to all persons whatsoever on pain of death and confiscation of all their goods and chattles, neither to harbour her, the said Jane Shore, in their houses nor to relievc her with food or raiment.

This was a home stroke indeed, and it would have been more charity to have taken and hanged her, than thus to have condemned her to starve alive, which was the design of this cruel proclamation. So that the poor and miserable woman was forced to wander up and down in a miserable and disconsolate manner, seeking in fields and hedges for food to sustain her life; and when they would afford her none, she would then search the dunghills, where (when she was known to come) some bones with more meat than usual, would be thrown on purpose for her by some that pitied her, but durst not be seen to relieve her. And yet in this poor condition the miserable wretch lived for some time, through the secret charity of well disposed persons.

After

After this, the wicked Duke of Gloucester, had so far carryed his point, that he was crowned King, and had caused his two royal nephews to be murdered; it so happened that Jane Shore going by the house of a certain baker that had received a particular kindness from her formerly; (for he having been condemned to die for being concerning in a riot in King Edward's days, she got his pardon freely) this baker seeing her go by, looking in and meager, and ready to perish, he had so grateful a remembrance of her former kindness, that he could not forbear, notwithstanding the proclamation, from taking a penny loaf, and trundling it after her: which she thankfully took up, and blessed him, with tears in her eyes, it being to her an acceptable present. But it proved a costly one to the poor baker; for some of his malicious neighbours having seen it, for envy always has a lynx's eye, informed against the charitable man; and the inexorable tyrant caused him to be hanged for not obeying his cruel proclamation: and it would have been a Mer-

cy

cy to Jane Shore, if he had also hanged her with him. For the poor baker's execution so terrify'd the people, that they durst afford her no relief. So that in piteous rags, hardily enough to hide her nakedness, she went about a most deplorable and truly miserable and wretched spectacle, wringing her hands, and sadly lamenting and bemoaning her dismal and unhappy condition.

And here, methinks, I cannot but look back a little, and reflect upon the strange and amazing change of worldly glory, and indeed of all worldly things. They that had seen Jane Shore in the arms of King Edward, the chief in the favour, smiling on whom she smil'd and frowning where she frowned; her chamber, like another court of requests, being always crouded with petitioners; could never have believed they should ever have seen her neglected, scorn'd, vilify'd, and reduc'd to that degree of poverty and want, that to have had the Liberty of begging, would have been esteem'd a mighty happiness.

N

ness: sure it must be extreamly surprizing, that she who was served in plate, and treated with the costliest viands, that either art or nature could procure, or water, earth, or air produce; that she, I say, should ever be reduced to that extreme degree of misery, as to be forced to sit upon a dunghill, and glad to eat the refuse of the dogs.

Thus as the Prince of Poets, VIRGIL
tells us,

*Now turns and chances every day,
Are of inconstant chance the constant arts,
Soon she gives, soon takes away,
She comes, embraces, nauseates you, and parts;
But if she stops, or if she goes,
The wiser man little joy, or little sorrow shows;
For over all, there hangs a double fate,
And few there are, who're always fortunate.
One gains, by what another is bereft,
The frugal destinies have only left,
A common Bank of happiness below,
Maintain'd like Nature by an ebb and flow;
A strange vicissitude of human fate,
Still altering, never in a steady state.*

But

But to return to Jane Shore: That she lived like a Camelion, almost upon nothing but air, all the time of King Richard, yet she made a shift, tho' but a very poor one, to survive that tyrant, who being slain fighting in Bosworth-Field, (too honourable a death for such a bloody villain) his wretched corps being stripped naked and bloody, was laid upon a horse, like a calf, and carried to Leicester, where it was for two days exposed to the view of the people, and after buried in the Grey-Fryers Monastery in that town. This tyrant's death gave a small respite to Jane Shore's miseries, for people then were not afraid to give her relief, and tho' she was still forced to beg, yet this was a great kindness to her, that people might bestow their charity upon her without fear. But this was but like a little reviving before death: For Henry the Seventh, who succeeded Richard the Third, having married Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of King Edward the Fourth, who hated Jane Shore as much as her Father loved her, pro-

cured another proclamation against Jane Shore, forbidding her to be relieved: which again forced her to wander up and down naked and helpless, and in as miserable a condition as before. So that now being destitute even of hope itself, (the only comfort of the miserable) and growing old withal, she finished her wretched life in a Ditch; which from her dying in it, does to this day retain the name of Shore-Ditch. However, tho' her sufferings in this world were exceeding great, and rendered her a truly miserable object, yet were they a means of bringing her to a sight of her sins, and a true repentance for them, as appears by her dying Lamentation, with which I conclude her life.

JANE SHORE'S Lamentation at her Death.

GOOD people, tho' by the rigor of the laws you are forbid to give me any relief, yet you may pity my distressed state, for the Scripture tells us, "That to the miserable, pity should be shewed." And that, and your prayers is all I
now

JANE SHORE.

now ask for: for I am now putting a period to a miserable life, a life which I have long been weary of. Nor is it my distressed circumstances only makes me so much long for death, I would not live again, although I were to live as I have done before, in all the glory, pomp, and pleasures of King Edward's court: No, I am happier now upon this dunghill, than I was even in his princely arms. For, O! it was an adulterous bed indeed, a bed of sorrow it has been to me, and filled me with unutterable griefs. O wretched, that ever I knew King Edward! That ever I was betrayed to his embraces. What floods of sorrow has my sin occasioned! But tears can never wash my sins away. O learn from me, good people, to beware of vain delights, and flesh pleasing of joys: they promise fair, but leave such stings behind them, as will eternally torment the soul, and drag it down to everlasting punishments. Alas, you think my punishment is grievous here in this world, and so it is indeed; for I have endured a thousand deaths in one, a thousand deaths, and yet I could not die: but now, my dying moments come, and I rejoice therein. Sincere repentance has secured my peace with Heaven above, against whom I have sinned. But O, where true repentance is not given, what seas of torments rack and drown the soul. O happy dunghill, how do I embrace thee. From thee my pardoned soul shall soar to Heaven, tho' in this ditch I leave my filthy and polluted carcass. O, that the name of Shore may be an antidote to stop the poisonous and foul contagion of raging lust for ever.

I look

Look not upon the gilded baits of sin,
For that the ruin of Jane Shore has been.

Leaving by her example this truth to posterity:

*Howsoever we are, yet without doubt,
Or first or last, our sins will find us out.*



A SONG.

JANE SHORE. 131

A SONG of the supposed Ghost of
Shore's Wife.

To the Tune of, *Live with me, &c.*



DAME Nature's darling let me be,
the map of sad calamity;

For

For never nane like Shore's fair wife,
 Had hadder end, nor better life;
 For I had all the Royal graces
 Of Edward's Love, and sweet embraces.

He being dead, my joys did die,
 And I grew hateful in each eye;
 Which makes me thus complain and say,
 The fairest flower will fade away:
 So I did trust too much the smiles
 Of wand'ring times bewitching guiles.

From noble blood I had no birth,
 My heritage six foot of earth;
 Tho' made but of the meanest mould,
 Yet Fortune gave me gifts of gold,
 And fin'd my face with favours fair,
 Like Phoebus in the azur'd air.

My shape was seemly to each sight,
 My eyes in looks were proved light;
 My countenance had sober grace,
 Nor gave my heart a lover's place:
 Yet Woe is me, excepting this,
 My king did win me to amiss.

If kind had made me black or brown;
 I then had liv'd in good renown,
 But woe is me, my peacock's pride,
 Did show a Face as it was dy'd.
 With Nature's blushing tapestry,
 Which mov'd and lik'd a princely eye.

I was

*I was intic'd by trains of trust,
 A king did love, consent I must:
 And so my Youth did run astray,
 To be a Prince's wanton prey;
 Then try that list, and they shall prove
 The ripest wits will soonest love*

*What need I more myself to clear,
 Promotion blindeth shame and fear;
 A king did win me to his call,
 A hope, that women seek for all;
 For such misdoubts, not following harms,
 Which lie and sleep in Princes Arms.*

*The Nightingale with merry voice,
 Dote make the hearers all rejoice;
 So with the Lark I still did sing,
 Sweet wanton musick to my king;
 And temper'd so my moving tongue,
 That at his Bosom still I hung.*

*My gestures, talk, and modest grace,
 Did bring my king in such a case,
 That I became his chiefeft hand,
 And govern'd him that rul'd this land:
 I bore the sword, he wore the crown;
 I struck the stroke, but he cast down.*

*If I did frown, he look'd awry,
 If I but speak, none durst deny;
 If I did smile, he sought aright,
 And would with smiles, my smiles requite;
 And hereupon I built my bower,
 And thought my sweet wou'd ne'er turne for ever.*

M.

My fortune went beyond my skill,
 For I had wealth and ease at will;
 With robes more briever than the sun,
 So did my fortune's glass still run,
 That in these earthly pleasures glad,
 A princely place a time I had.

At last this bliss was turn'd to bale,
 And all my fortune's 'gan to fall;
 For I was brought to sorrows hands,
 Which made me weep and wring my hands,
 When Edward dy'd, my chief joy
 Was chang'd to care and sad annoy.

My King intomb'd, and laid in ground,
 I was beset with sorrows round,
 And slanders falsly rais'd that I
 Gave poison to his Majesty;
 Which mortal Hate, and cruel spite,
 Berett me of my fortune quite.

The Lord Protector being then,
 My foe, and worst of living man,
 He judg'd me soon to live in shame,
 Though I deseru'd no such like blame;
 A penance took by his command,
 With burning taper in my hand.

As wandring Eyes start'd in my face,
 Meek patience lent me midst grace,
 That I was prais'd of every man,
 Whilst shame fac'd blood my cheeks down ran;
 Ten thousand said, with softer cheer,
 It was a grief to see me there,

My

My penance pass'd the tyrant's mind ;
 To further mischief was inclin'd ;
 He spoil'd my goods, and gave command,
 That none my succ'ring friend should stand,
 And being left thus bare and poor,
 I begg'd for food from door to door.

Being thus cast down from princely fare,
 Of alms to take an hungry share,
 The crumbs that fell from blind and lame,
 To pick them up I did me frame ;
 And thus my prayer, and heav'd up palm,
 I was enforc'd to live by alms.

The golden chains I want to wear,
 Were chang'd to rags, both thin and bare ;
 I had no house to hide my head,
 The streets and stalls my nightly bed ;
 My flesh consum'd was like a corse,
 Yet none of me must have remorse.

At last thus ended this my life ;
 Examples take both maid and wife ;
 For wanton ways deceiv'd me,
 Though bolster'd out by Majesty.
 The time will change, says dying Shore ;
 If thou misdo, offend no more.

F I N I S.

BRITISH MUSEUM

